

TIMELESS LITHUANIA

BY

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ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY AND MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY
OF THE UNITED STATES TO LITHUANIA



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DR. OWEN J. C. NOREM

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DEDICATION

This book is respectfully dedicated to the 25th Anniversary or Silver Jubilee of the Lithuanian Freedom and Independence, which was achieved and maintained by the spirit and perseverance of her people, who endured privations, starvation, untold hardships and have surmounted all obstacles so that future generations may enjoy liberty of the ancient bygone days. So let the liberty bell toll over this beautiful land again.

9711
Lithuanian American
Congress

FOREWORD

In July, 1937, President Roosevelt named as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Lithuania the Honorable Owen J. C. Norem of Havre, Montana.

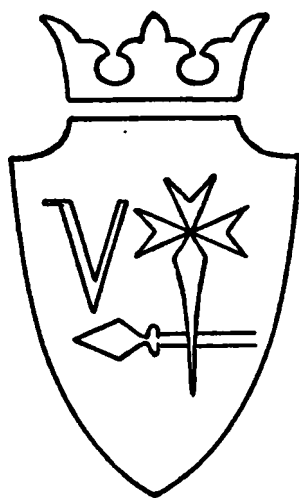
Mr. Norem was eminently fitted for this post. He had pursued a brilliant career in the Lutheran Church and had taken an active part in civic affairs. He understood people and their needs. He brought to the Legation in Kaunas an administration of American affairs that could rightly be termed as the "golden rule diplomacy."

During the turbulent years of 1937-1940, the good relation between Lithuania and the United States was at its best. The Lithuanians appreciated the sympathetic understanding and treatment of their grievous problems, internal and external, and had reason to be thankful to this American Minister who had become their firm friend and to the American people whom he represented.

Dr. Norem by reason of his scholarly attainments is peculiarly fitted for the task of interpreting to the American people the story of the Lithuanian nation.

JAMES E. MURRAY.

Senator from Montana.

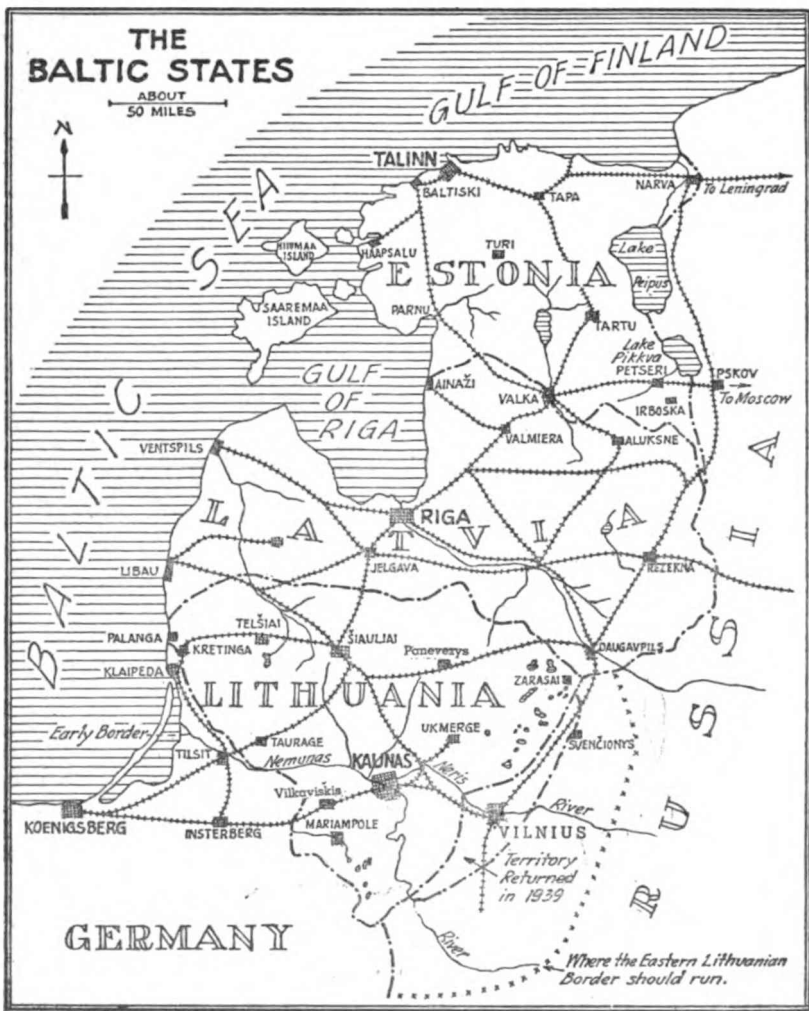


Coat of Arms
of
Vytautas the Great

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Lithuania is a land that commands our attention. With a past that is steeped in mystery, it presents a challenge to the historian. Every bit of evidence revealed by ethnology, archeology, and ancient history must be carefully gleaned. Most Lithuanians agree that their remarkable nation has existed on the shores of the Baltic Sea from time immemorial. Let us then briefly survey the history and environment of these sharply marked Aryans who have remained apart from the Teuton and Scandinavian, the Finn and the Slav.

A country comparatively unknown outside of Europe, small in size and shaped as a heart, Lithuania lies far to the north across the Baltic Sea from Sweden and Finland and, unfortunately, in the military pathway of two great rumbling and crushing empires, Germany and Russia. In the fifteenth century she had claimed a vast domain extending from the Baltic to the Black Sea; in 1920 A. D., she was content to sign a peace treaty with Russia which granted her inalienable right to some 33,000 square miles known to the Russians as the administrative districts of Kaunas, Vilnius and Suvalkai. These boundaries proved transient also, for in the ensuing warfare of 1920 the Poles claimed Suvalkai and stole Vilnius. Lithuania secured the Klaipeda (Memel) Territory in 1923 and held this vital and important 1000 square miles until Germany forced its return in 1939. In the fall of this year, the Russians gave their famous "Trojan horse gift" of a part of the Vilnius District. Thus we see that the size of Lithuania has varied considerably. We shall term as "Lithuania Proper" the territory lying in the Nemunas basin and including both Klaipeda and the capital city of Vilnius. This region approximates in size the State of Maine and enjoys a similar climate.

Lithuania is a land of surpassing beauty. It is resplendent with lakes, rivers and beautiful forests. Few hills are to be observed in the softly rolling country with altitudes varying only from sea level to 260 meters. Little wonder that the people have a deep passion for their beloved homeland and desire only that

such invaders as the Germans and the Russians will depart and leave them in peace. They appreciate the beauty of their Baltic Home and tenderly care for the soil which so abundantly nourishes them. A visitor to the land is impressed with their skill in caring for the brightly colored flora and the wealth of the forest.

The lake regions, totaling over 150,000 acres of water surface, are known as the Zarasai Lakes (to which can be added the lakes by Svencionys), the Alytus and Daugai region, and the Birzulis-Rekyva section. These water gems are sometimes discovered with startling swiftness when a car rounds a bend in the road or tops a hill, and the impression is not easily forgotten. Some of the lakes are famous for their scenery and sports. Various spas were founded to augment the outdoor health movement. Some of these spas were noted for their stimulating mineral waters, while others claimed a radio-active water and mud. Birstonas was the most famous of these health resorts. Complete facilities were provided here for treatment of various ailments. Lithuania also had forest health resorts where sun treatment augmented the usual medical care. Old Sol was regarded as the greatest doctor by practically all of the people and water and sun bathing in the nude was a common practice. They literally loved the water and a common scene might be described as father fishing while mother washed clothes in the river where daughter and son played about and swam.

Since rivers play such an important part in the life of a land, let us look at the strictly Lithuanian rivers. First and foremost is the mighty Nemunas which has always been Lithuania's Own. This river has never been surrendered completely to any foe. However, it is peculiar that while holding the great length of this fast flowing river, the early Lithuanians failed to evaluate properly the strategic value of its mouth in the Kurisches Haff where it empties into the Baltic Sea. They failed to make a serious attempt to oust the invading knights from the fortress of Memel but rather turned their eyes eastward to spend their conquering strength.

Swift flowing rivers join the turbulent Nemunas to drain the land quickly. Such tributary rivers are the Neris, which joins it at Kaunas after emerging from the region about Vilnius; the Nevezis, which has its origin in the swamplands of Troskunai; the Dubysa which originates near Siauliai; the Mituva, which flows through Jurbarkas; and the Jura, which starts near Rietavas and attempts to meet the Sesupe coming from the south. These rivers form the

inland waterways of the country and contribute in no small measure to the prosperity of the people. Less important rivers are the Sventoji, which is tributary to the Neris, and the Venta, which flows into Latvia to the north. The Musa river flows for a short distance in Lithuania and then enters Latvia near Mitau.

The verdant pine forests of Lithuania are a delight to the nature lover, for besides their inherent wild beauty, they harbor prolific flora and fauna of unusual variety. Students of nature have reported the existence of more than 200 species of birds. This list includes the cuckoo, stork, snipe (quite unlike our American variety of snipe), nightingale, meadowlark, and the swift. Among the common forest animals are the red fox, deer, wild boar, rabbit, and the timber wolf. Ranging along the coast and over the sand dunes of the Nerstrand is the rare specie called elchen (elk)—really a vestigial remnant of the moose family.

In days of old this bountiful reservoir of natural wealth was quite full. Wars and occupations have left their scars. Many of the wild species have been sadly depleted. The great Lords which ruled during the 17th and 18th centuries exacted a ruthless toll without regard to posterity. The world war of 1914-1918 found the German war industries eating away materials stolen from the great Lithuanian forests.

Since the day when that clear clarion call to awaken as a restored Republic was issued from Vilnius, the Lithuanian nation bent every effort to restore the great natural wealth. The government followed an enlightened program of reforestation and carefully regulated hunting privileges. Notable results were achieved up to the year 1940 but no one can estimate the recent damage caused by the recurring Russian and German occupations.

During this period of restored independence, Lithuanian students took pride in viewing the early history of their country. They found that sometime before 1500 B. C. perhaps, the original Lithuanian tribes had reached or were indigenous to the shores of the friendly Baltic Sea. They resisted all subsequent movements of restless tribes and nations. By the year 1200 A. D., they, in turn, had grown restless and sent their legions on long marches. During this period of their Golden Age, 1200-1450 A. D., the Lithuanian sword taught respect to all tribes and nations living between the Baltic and the Black Sea. Such cities as Pakov, Tver and Riazan paid their regular tribute to the Lithuanian masters. The Tar-

tars had been kept out of central Europe and there was no one to deny the Lithuanian his claim to greatness. The gifts and tributes of the Pope in Rome and the Emperors of the Western Empire are proof enough of this.

This period of greatness was followed by decline. The mighty pagan had kept his head unbowed. The Christian Lithuanian learned the duty of serving various masters in turn. First the Pole, who conquered the Lithuanian through the softening of the nobility and political intrigue. Then came the Russian, who took over when both Lithuanian and Pole had grown soft from a life of decadent ease. Both the Polish and Russian occupations left their indelible scars upon the soul of this great people. There remained an inner core of national strength. The mother taught the children that they should remain true Lithuanians. She taught them the precious language that would bind them together. Gradually this spirit of resistance developed and prevailed against the enemy.

The Lithuanians had resisted the advances of the Teutonic Knights when they engaged in their "holy war" against them. The Lithuanians were the last proud pagans to resist the advances of western and eastern Church. In Lithuania, the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic met the pagan. The pagan chose the latter when it went into voluntary union with Poland. Catholic priests will tell you that as Lithuanians resisted strenuously the advances of Christianity, so today they hold tenaciously to their Christian precepts. Others will tell you that if you scratch a Lithuanian deeply enough you will find a pagan.

In the winter of 1918, the Germans were opposed to the Lithuanians declaring their independence, but in the autumn, after the Armistice, aided them with materials of war to gain this end. There followed a period during which intermittent fighting was carried on by ragged forces against the Russians, Poles, and straggling Germans in turn. Finally, in 1920, the Russian Bolshevik government saw fit to recognize a principle they hated and gave way to Lithuania's claim to the right of self determination. Three former Lithuanian provinces (under the old Russian system) were turned over to her as her rightful due and she was required to relinquish all claim to her former wide-spread domain. Lithuania received the provinces of Vilnius, Kaunas and Suvalkai (an area of approximately 33,500 square miles, equal in extent to Maine.)

She felt constrained to return the City of Suvalkai to Poland

since obviously the Polish people had become more numerous in this former Lithuanian district. She asked Poland to recognize her right to Vilnius and Kaunas, a recognition given by Poland and solemnly attested to by the representatives of the Warsaw government. Less than two days after signing the treaty, the Poles moved a tremendous force of men into the Vilnius Territory and city under a certain General Zeligowski. This act has lived on in the history of calumny as one of the worst ever perpetrated. Thus was born the great Vilnius question which troubled the League of Nations and Eastern Europe for twenty years, since Lithuania consistently refused to barter away her right.

Shortly after the Vilnius steal of 1920, the Lithuanian government undertook a new involvement — the Klaipeda (Memel) problem. Following the breakdown of German resistance in 1918, the Allied governments had undertaken a serious study of philology and kindred subjects with the end in view of correctly settling the ethnographical claims of peoples in disputed areas. It was all quite confusing to the diplomats who obviously didn't know very much about what they were trying to do. The French insisted that the Memel Territory be lopped off the former German Empire and given to them under a mandate. The implications passed about the conference tables were to the effect that Lithuania would be given this choice morsel when it was definitely established that the inhabitants were originally Lithuanian. Time passed with no serious attempt to settle the affair equitably, in the estimation of the Lithuanians at least.

In 1923, therefore, the Lithuanians marched a military band into the Territory and took over with a show of force. The French and British were obliged to withdraw and shortly thereafter a Commission was nominated to draw up what proved to be one of the most foolish documents ever foisted on a peace loving people. It gave the Territory to the care of Lithuania but effectively bound her hands so that she could not capitalize upon her gain over and beyond a prescribed limit. The instruments were known as the Klaipeda (Memel) Statute and Convention. Such were the checks and balances that no semblance of harmony could ever be attained since the majority of Memellanders continued to regard themselves as outraged German citizens and pined for union with the Reich. Germany settled the argument when she took back the Territory in March of 1939, just one year after Poland had forced Lithuania to open the Diplomatic and Commercial channels. Both

Lithuanian problems had been settled by the threatened use of force.

There was a brief attempt on the part of Lithuania to find some suitable outlet to the Sea in lieu of her lost port of Memel. Some goods were shipped via Riga or Libau and an attempt was made to utilize the ancient sanded harbor of Sventoji but with little success. It became apparent that Lithuania would have to make the best of the 99 year lease which Germany had offered. The tension of the 1939 summer and the opening of the war in September placed serious restrictions upon further trade in the open market. The presence of Russian garrisons in the fall of 1939 caused the Lithuanian government to view the situation with extreme alarm. It was necessary to include Russia in the new trading arrangements since Germany had clearly evinced no further interest in light of the Russo-German Pact.

Strangely enough, the Lithuanian government was able to keep a level keel and steered a good course through the spring and early summer of 1940. Her currency remained on a parity since it was backed by gold. However, the Russian wolf had too long tarried outside the former "Baltic windows" and soon the trumped up charges were formulated into an ultimatum that could not be denied. A tremendous invading host in June, 1940, descended upon Lithuania like a swarm of locusts and swept on upward through Latvia and Estonia. With this second invasion by Russian troops, the Lithuanian democracy ceased to be. Its President, Mr. Smetona, fled to Germany. Those who trusted the Bolshevik and waited to deal with him eventually found themselves in the dreaded military prisons of Oriental Russia where they languish at this writing.

The invasion of Lithuania by the German army in June, 1941, brought a temporary cheer from the vast throng of patient Lithuanians but it was soon apparent that one slavery had been exchanged for another. Many thousands of patriots had fought against the Bolshevik when word was secretly given that the Germans were advancing. The Lithuanian national anthem was again heard in Kaunas and Vilnius. The Lithuanian standard was unfurled and a temporary government was hastily set up. Within a short time, the Germans made it quite clear that the country would be administered by a military command. Thus today,

Lithuania remains a virtual prisoner of the Third Reich and awaits deliverance from the army of Hitler.

It will help your understanding of the Baltic States if you bear in mind that cities and rivers have at different times in history been called by various names. The German or Russian terminology is perhaps best known to cartographers and has appeared most generally on maps reproduced in magazines and newspapers. These names constitute the imported terminology. Let us contrast them with the more recently accepted names which are actually older. In Lithuania we find:

Accepted name	Imported name
Vilnius	Wilno or Vilna
Kaunas	Kovno
Klaipeda	Memel
Nemunas (river)	Nieman, Memel
Panevezys	Poneviej
Siauliai	Shavle

In Latvia, we find:

Daugava (river)	Dvina
Daugavpils	Dvinsk
Jelgava	Mitau
Kurzeme	Courland
Liepaja	Libau
Ventspils	Windau

In Estonia, we find:

Hiiumaa (island)	Dago
Parnu	Pernau
Saaremaa (island)	Oesel
Tallinn	Reval
Tartu	Dorpat

In Finland, we find:

Helsinki	Helsingfors
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CHAPTER TWO

THE EARLY FORMATIVE PERIOD OF LITHUANIAN HISTORY

The question, where did the Lithuanian nation come from, is not easily answered. Apparently they were well established in their home on the Baltic Sea and in the basin of the Nemunas river at a very early year. Some historians believe that the Lithuanians had arrived at this land, which we shall call Lithuania Greater and designate as the territory lying between the Daugava river on the north and the Bug river on the south, extending eastward to the Dnieper river, as early as the year 1500 B.C. Those who hold to this theory would perhaps explain early contacts with Scythian, Greek, Finnish, and other peoples. They would point out that the Lithuanian language bears unmistakable likeness to the ancient tongues such as the Sanskrit, early Greek, and the Indian Veda literature. Certain similarities of worship and custom can be faintly traced in the Lithuanian literature and other early data.

There are those who say that such evidence is flimsy at best and prefer to believe that the Lithuanian tribes are an outgrowth of the indigenous peoples of the Baltic region. The archeologists who tell us that ancient peoples lived in the Nemunas basin as early as the year 10,000 B. C., will perhaps favor the theory that present day Lithuanians are an admixture of several strong nations who were able to endure the rigors of early existence and the march of time. One thing is certain, the thread of evidence is rather dimly followed at the present time and much of the evidence purporting to be history is mixed with legend.

Some historians, such as H. G. Wells and others, merely refer to Eastern Europe of the year 1500 B.C. as being inhabited by Finnish and Scythian peoples. They would perhaps opine that in the movement north of the so-called Nordics, the Lithuanian nation found itself in the wake of early Scandinavians and pushed against the Germanic hosts of the west and the Finnish peoples of the north. One fact is apparent, great movements of peoples did take place and migrations left their impress much after the manner of the glacial movements.

It is a pity that great chroniclers were lacking during this period or, if they did exist, that their recordings are wanting. It

is difficult to rely upon vague sources and expect a well knit account. Some writers have followed this course and tell us that the Lithuanian tongue itself is proof that the early Greeks were either friends or relatives of the Lithuanians. It is pointed out that certain agricultural practices of the Scythians were well known to the early Lithuanian tribes. Some believe that the Lithuanians had contacts with Cretans, Lydians, Tracians, and other tribes of the early period of history.

They direct our attention to the famous collection of Lithuanian folksongs known as the *Dainos* and filled with very interesting material. One expression refers to the Lithuanian maid exclaiming: "Siuntė mane motinėlė į Dunojų vandenėlio." Translated this means: "My mother had sent me for water from the Danube." Is this reference to water from the Danube indicative of an early Lithuanian settlement adjacent to the Macedonian people? We shall have occasion to refer frequently to the Lithuanian *Dainos*, for these ancient sagas tell us much about early Lithuanian life and reveal, in measure, the great soul of the nation.

It appears certain that the Lithuanians first settled in the Nemunas basin and had as their relatives and neighbors the Prussians, who lived westward in the region now known as East Prussia, the Latvians, who lived on the river Daugava, and the Jotvingians who lived south of Lithuania Proper.* These kindred people lived quite peacefully and enjoyed the simple life on lands that were carefully cultivated. The great forests were full of game, honey, and such delicacies as mushrooms. The swamps offered a measure of security, for in themselves they constituted a defense against aggression. The above mentioned component parts of the Lithuanian nation spoke tongues very similar and to this day the Lithuanian can understand the Latvian.

Certain it is that life was not very complicated in these early times. It was easy to procure an abundant living from the bounteous land. Long periods of peace made possible definite gains in the home economy. So well were the early lessons learned and so tenaciously have the Lithuanian people clung to their wealth of tradition, that even today they are largely self-sufficient. In the early days, their wants were few and their life was full. They

* "The Liths, like the Celts, are the vestigial remainders of a venerable race, a branch of the three Litho-Baltic races of which the now extinct Borussian and present Letts were kinsmen." By Malbone W. Graham, Jr.

sang in the spring, summer, fall, and winter out of sheer joy in living. They sang when they worked in the fields or at the loom, for they considered it a privilege to labor and produce. A strange people?

They hunted in their great forests and brought home furs which could be fashioned into garments to protect against the cold. Many a tale was told of fights with the bear, the wolf, or the savage wild boar. The Lithuanian took a special delight in hunting the wily fox and many a song was sung of this cunning beast. The hunting of predatory animals in the early years seems not to have been so much a sport as a necessary precaution against the loss of such animals as cattle, sheep, goats, and poultry. The Lithuanian of early times was a cautious husbandman.

Farming was undoubtedly very crude and on a small scale. Small fields by the river side or in clearings demanded constant care and attention, for seasons were short. When we think of the line running through Lithuania as also passing through the Hudson Bay of Canada, we can appreciate this observation. The winter days are short and often exceedingly cold. A wet fall and a wet spring generally matched a winter that had an abundance of snow. Thus one can see that the farmer carefully sowed his rye, wheat, oats, barley and flax with an eye to the growing season and also gathered these crops in due season. While it is true that some winter days had little more than five hours of sunshine, it is also true that summer days had almost eighteen hours of light. No word of complaint was forthcoming, for the Lithuanian has always been content with God's bounty. There was a proverb which assured them that the earth would always provide a good living and they believed it.

Evidence set before us by archeologists* suggests that between 1000-400 B.C. the Lithuanians farmed with various iron instruments of crude design. Iron household utensils were known to them as well as iron and bronze bits, stirrups, swords, spears, etc. These articles very likely came to Lithuania from their place of origin in the southlands. Intrepid traders advanced cautiously

* Rev. Jusaitis in his *Lithuanian History* records that such archeologists as Tischler, Lissauer, and Bezenberger have discovered, in the burial pits of early Lithuania, objects of great antiquity which include: "iron knives, chisels, sickles, spears, swords, bronze bridles, spurs, bracelets, buckles, clasps, glass beads, gold and silver ornaments."

overland or by way of the sea to trade such wares for the desired amber, honey, furs and other Lithuanian trading materials. Undoubtedly the trading occupation was precarious and uncertain in these early times.

The demand for amber was quite likely enhanced by such findings as that attributed to Thales, a Greek philosopher of the year 640 B.C., who stated that it had definite electric properties and therefore was especially efficacious when used as a charm. The presence in early burial pits of gold and silver ornaments, as well as glass beads, would indicate that amber commanded a fancy price.

The reported presence of amber objects in the tombs of the Pharaohs and at such places as the ruins of Mikenai in Greece (Micene) would suggest that trading at an even earlier date than 1500 B.C. was possible and probable. Great quantities of amber found their way also to China and India. This material is most common to the Baltic Sea.

Just how these "amber fishing Aestians" as Tacitus calls them, spent their early leisure hours is uncertain. Very likely after the days of toiling in the forests or fields, they would gather in their homes which were grouped in communal centers. These communal centers afforded the necessary social intercourse and provided greater protection against the common enemies. Such authority as was exercised centered about the heads of the families. This type of government has been termed patriarchal, and though democratic, had a definite element of weakness. Occasionally a Council matter was discussed but generally each family or group of families found it convenient to follow their own inclinations. We must remember that there was plenty of land and the hunting was good. In the family grouping lay the germ of clan and tribal development which eventually allowed the choice of a Grand Duke.

It was during these early years that the Lithuanian mythology was developed. In the course of time a substantial list of deities came into being and we might mention for example such worthies as: Perkunas, God of Thunder and Lightning; Zemininkas, God of the Earth; Patela, God of the Underworld; Gabija, God of Fire (fire held a prominent place in the worship); Shaltis, God of the Cold Weather; Bangputys, God of the Four Winds; Vieshpats,

God of Life; Laume, Goddess of the Clouds; Yurata, Goddess of the Sea; Milda, Goddess of the Nations; Giltine, Goddess of the Death; and Medeine, Goddess of the Forest. There were others too but the foregoing will acquaint the reader with the brighter lights. Perkunas must be given top ranking, for his potent words were easily understood and struck terror into many hearts.

This pagan worship soon demanded the services of priests who were known as Vaidilas. Over these presided a set of Krives with even a higher dignitary who bore the title Krive Krivaitis. I presume he would rank somewhere in the Archbishop class. Aiding the priests in these rituals were vestal virgins called Vaidilutes.

One can visualize the ancient bards singing the simple lays at gatherings of humble folk by a home or a communal center. There were stories of travel and adventure to be told. There were tales of hunting, fishing, and fighting expeditions. Quite interesting are the sagas of homelife and love. More interesting, perhaps, are the stories wherein nature is given a voice and the rocks tell tales, the brooks sing their account, and trees confide their secrets. The forest itself becomes a protecting mother who nourishes her beloved and guards them from the would be invader. This personalization of nature seems to have evoked the greatest interest in the minds of these early Lithuanians and many of the songs have endured to this very day. This collection of old and new folksongs has been called the Dainos.

It was not difficult for the pagan to link the cry of the cuckoo with that of a lamenting mother who has returned to console her children. It was not difficult to observe that the stork at rest upon one spindly leg, with mournful countenance, was a soul doing penance. The idea of reincarnation seems to have been held in the very early times though just what form would be assumed in the reincarnation was never sure. The thought of just retribution seems fairly well developed as well.

Patiently the pagan priests followed their flocks about and ministered to their wants. They became very important personages and their counsel was much sought after. Later accounts tell of priests actually leading the Lithuanian legions into battle. Most generally, they are associated with the religious fire altar set by some great oak, at which location they gave forth their

divinations and prophecies. Unusual signs were immediately divined and utilized. Doubtless they counseled in matters of disease and settled simple quarrels that came to the attention of their rustic tribunal.

One certain evidence has been handed down to posterity and that is the practice of cremating the remains of important personages. Numerous pagan burial pits show unmistakable evidence of this rite and certain illustrious characters required many horses and materials for the death ride. Priests officiated at such services.

In the great museum at Kaunas, provisional capital of Lithuania during the years of restored liberty (1918-1940), can be found a complete display of archeological evidence. Metallic objects range in a wide variety of shapes, and one can trace the evolution of the pagan mystic signs such as the swastika and crude cross into the form of the Christian Cross. Peasant art included the rays of the sun and the sign of the moon in fashioning the modern-day cross which occupied a prominent place before dwellings. This was gradually brought about for Lithuania remained pagan until the fifteenth century.

Much has been written about the Lithuanian language. Philologists have noted that it is rich in archaic forms and that though very much a living language it retained a great mass of the original inheritance. There is a similarity between the Lithuanian and the ancient Sanskrit. Some scholars have noted a similarity of structure with that of the old Greek. Goethe of Germany is said to have remarked: "If you wish to hear how our ancestors spoke, listen to the Lithuanians." Surely the language is a vigorous and vital one with great promise for the future. It is elastic enough to grow, while giving expression in a most complicated manner. It is capable of superb handling and offers itself to definite scientific treatment. It is musical and complete. More will be said of it later in this study.

CHAPTER THREE

THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1-1200

This is the period of Lithuanian history when the great trading nations make contacts and the migrations of the Goths, Vandals, Huns and other nations stir all of Europe. During these long years of unrest, the Lithuanian nation had reason to be thankful for its isolated and insulated position. More than once she was threatened, and quite certainly she was affected to some degree by the stirring of the nations on the march. In that grand shuffling of peoples about the European chessboard, the Goths exerted perhaps the greatest influence upon the Lithuanian nation. Various accounts have arisen which show a close relationship. Whether it was the Lithuanian youth who joined the Goths in their march, or the Goths who intermarried and stayed on with the Lithuanians is not clear, but certainly the Lithuanians were affected by these people migrating from the north to that place in southern Europe where eventually they split into the Visi Goths and the Ostro Goths.

Dr. Alexander Rackus has published a very interesting account which illustrates that an interchange took place between the Goths and the Lithuanians. He points out that the Goths not only lived so long on the northern shores of the Baltic that Gothic terms were applied to the Lithuanians, but also various Gothic leaders arose to be called names with a Lithuanian ring. Dr. Rackus quotes Pytheus as saying: "The Goths live at the mouth of the river Namon (Nemunas). Here, indeed, the waves cast out the amber." Dr. Rackus points out that Tacitus confused the Goths with the Lithuanians in referring to them as a people living by the Livonians and enjoying a complete freedom.

It is unlikely that any nation of Europe could have completely isolated itself. The vast cold tundra served as a protective barrier for the Finns; swamps and great forests kept the masses of moving people out of Lithuania; but some infiltration obviously took place. When one considers the fair complexion of the sturdy Lithuanian of today, it is correctly assumed that a strain of Gothic and Viking blood has been absorbed.

The fact remains that the Lithuanian sought to keep himself apart from other peoples. He lived on the alert and took advant-

age of all natural barriers such as swift moving rivers and treacherous swamps. He evidenced a distinctive courage in battle and was quite willing to cross swords with any who dared to penetrate the vastness of his forested domain. During this early Christian era, he gradually assumed a reputation for fighting propensities which even his enemies readily admitted. He wished only to live and to let live and therefore engaged in defensive action only. His Gods were sufficient for his religious needs and he did not seek to impose them upon other peoples. He was suspicious of the wayfarer who approached his home, but could treat an honourable guest in a manner that elicited the highest kind of praise.

During these early days, the simple patriarchal form of government prevailed. The family was subservient to the will of the father. The heads of the families would gather at the council tables to decide action which affected a group or small clan. Clans, in turn, joined together into larger units which eventually came to be known as the people of Zemaitija or inhabitants of the lowlands, and the Aukstaitija or people who dwell in the higher regions.

This lack of a national unity may explain the absence of national energy during the early Christian centuries. It was the insistent pounding of hostile bands of Teutonic Knights from the west and the north which eventually caused the Lithuanians to regard a national unity as necessary and stirred them to call forth such leaders as Mindaugas, Gediminas, and Vytautas.

Life in Lithuania was full, free, and vibrant during those days. She had something to give to other nations with whom she came in contact. She was proud and defiant even though she lacked a close coordination of her people and the organization for conquest. The restless Goths, Burgundians, Lombardians, Vandals and Huns were able with less resistance to find their place in southern Europe where living conditions were deplorable and governments were in a state of decay from riotous living and excess.

The great historian, Gibbons, has recorded, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, the story of decay and dissolution. The roving avalanche of barbarians moved upon the putrid corpse of Rome to give it new life and direction. During these days

the Christian Church was strong even though it was largely a secret organization seeking refuge in catacombs. It was serious business to be a Christian.

At about the time of the happy demise of the decadent Roman Empire, there existed in Lithuania a city known as Rusne. This city was located on the river Nemunas near the point where it empties its waters into the Kurisches Haff. Here the Lithuanian priests had set up the most elaborate temples of worship and to this place came the fervent Lithuanian pagans. Most likely it was a momentous occasion for those who traveled from the upper reaches of the Nemunas river to witness the grand religious ceremonies which took place. Here stood a tall hexagonal tower near the enclosure wherein were observed the fire worship and other rites and processions. Very likely, there were oak trees in and about the temple, for this tree seems to have occupied a special place of veneration.

It is thought likely that the river now known as the Nemunas (Niemen and Memel are other titles by which it is known) was called the Rusne, and that from this place came the Rurik which in the ninth century was invited to rule over the Russians. For more complete data on this theory we must await further excavation of known ruins. Suffice it to say that evidence revealed to date shows the existence of the place.

To such gathering places as Rusne the trade would be drawn and great marts would spring up. The Phoenicians perhaps operated from a point somewhere on the Nerstrand or sandy stretch of land which separates the Kurisches Haff from the Baltic Sea. Perhaps this location was close by the outlet point which has changed in the years past. Following the Phoenicians were the Frisians who sailed their trading vessels about the shores of the great East Sea or the Baltic. These people traded with the Swedes, Finns, Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians. The trade was highly profitable.

One of the more important cities of the Frisians was Heidaby on the island of Jutland. Sailing from this point, and from cities of the Frisians on the mainland, were the long boats laden with trading merchandise. (It is noteworthy that St. Ansgar came to Heidaby in the year 826.) The Frisians made their way northward to the forbidding depth of the fjords of Norway and thus

came into direct contact with the Vikings who eventually took over their trading routes and vastly extended them.

We have mentioned the possibility that contact with the Lithuanian nation was made by the Phoenicians and Frisians. We have seen that the main point of contact was most likely at Rusne, located at the mouth of the river Nemunas. Possibly the intrepid traders sought better opportunities up the river. Other probable trading points might have been established at Klaipeda, Palanga and Sventoji. However, it is idle to surmise about the mechanics of the trading operations. Suffice it to say that trade they did, and oftentimes the Lithuanian natives were amazed at the values they received for the bundles of amber, raw furs, dried fish and other produce which they brought to barter for those cunningly woven silks, the spices and fruits, the salt, and the iron and bronze objects from the south and west.

An account that flavors of the legendary tells of an attempt to form a Lithuanian Federation in the fifth century. Hertmanawicz is the authority for the story which relates how Prince Brutenis and Prince Vaidevutis sought to consolidate the various clans into a working entity. We read of such names as: "Shalauja, Natangia, Bartia, Varmia, Oggonia, Galindia, Pamexonia, Pagezonja, Kulmia, Sambia, Sudavia, Nadravja." Perhaps such a classification included various units of the original Prussians or Borussians as well as the Latvians. The Federation, if it did exist, does not seem to have achieved any definite results, for the Lithuanians of the year 800 seem just as divided as they were in the year 400.

Following the great movement of the Huns from the East into Europe, the Slavic peoples moved sluggishly to take up positions about the Lithuanians. The Poles, coming from the inner reaches of Russia, migrated to the Oder river to occupy territory left vacant by the Vandals and Burgundians. These Poles had traversed a familiar route along the great Vistula river, having been propelled by their more vigorous cousins, the Czechs, who swarmed into the land now known as Bohemia and Moravia. The Bulgars pushed into southern Europe to force the Serbs and Croats into mountainous pastures. In the movement of Poles and Czechs, the Jotvingians were directly affected.

In the vast regions that would some day be known as Russia, the tribes were also milling about. The Finns were being pushed

northward, with the Khazars dominating the upper reaches of the Volga river. The Semitic Jew had endured persecution at the hands of his timeless enemy the Semitic Arab, and many of them had penetrated to cities such as Khazan on the Volga as early as the 8th century. Numerous other Russian tribes were leading a nomadic existence on the broad stretches of the Russian plains and steppes. The stage was being set for the advent of the Vikings from the north, known to the Greeks as the Varangians.

Some scholars seem to think that the Viking penetrations into Russia came from the south. It is argued that their long ships penetrated the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea, and thence proceeded up the Dnieper and Dniester rivers. We can be certain that they did manage to overrun Russia in a creditable manner while seeking their trade routes. These courageous warriors knew no bounds to their trading and fighting expeditions. They conquered rivers with ease and managed all portages in and about Europe. During the course of their meanderings, they came in direct contact with the Lithuanians and left a definite impression upon these people. One can understand that shortly after this era of contact, the Lithuanian nation took to the warpath and conquered an Empire in Eastern Europe. The Vikings had served as worthy examples of what could be done along the line of conquest.

Those who have examined the original Viking boats which have been uncovered from their burial places in Norway and now are preserved in national museums, can readily comprehend how the intrepid Viking dared to conquer all the Seas and cross the Atlantic to discover America in about the year 1000 A. D. The Viking ships were long boats of sturdy construction and capable of great speed. They could easily carry 40 to 100 men with full battle equipment. Their shallow draught enabled them to ride the rivers with ease and it is significant that shipbuilders of our day and age still copy their sleek and beautiful lines in designing modern boats. The Viking, in his speedy vessel, was destined to awaken all of Europe from the soporific complacency of the dead years known as the eighth and ninth centuries.

We might designate the Viking Era as extending from 700-1100 A. D.* It is difficult to say exactly when the Vikings took over the

* "The Lithuanians themselves remained undisturbed for centuries, save perhaps, for periodic raids by the Vikings." OWEN RUTTER.

trading enterprises of the Frisians and followed their paths about the Baltic Sea. By the ninth century, a certain Rurik left the Viking domain to give rule and order to the awakening Russian. We know that he and his compatriots established cities such as Novgorod and ruled over Kiev, Pskov, and other cities. In fact, King Rurik gave the name Russia to these vast wild lands wherein lived so many primitive peoples speaking diverse tongues and possessing various cultures. But Russia conquered Rurik and his descendants. The Viking blood was amalgamated into the strain of the mixture until all became Oriental and strange to the westerner.

Not all the Vikings who penetrated into Russia were settlers. Perhaps the majority of them preferred to ride their boats on the tossing waters and to seek out new marts. Dealing in slaves was not beneath the early Vikings and perhaps this led people in France and elsewhere to pray to the Lord for deliverance against the Viking raids. The Blitzkrieging by the Vikings during the period around 800 A.D. apparently gave Charlemagne a severe headache, for he could never catch up with them. The Sea Kings ruled the waves of the Baltic and the Mediterranean Seas. It was the desire to find a shorter passage from the north to the great trading center of the Byzantine Empire that led them over the various rivers of Eastern Europe.

In pushing up the Vistula river to where they could portage across to the Dniester river, the Vikings penetrated Lithuanian territory and undoubtedly encountered some stiff competition, for they seemed to prefer the route further eastward. They managed to pass up the Daugava river to the point where they could bring their boats over to the Dnieper and thus sail on to the Black Sea and Constantinople. Still another route was along the Neva river and past the city of Novgorod. It is even probable that they managed to ride the great Volga river down to where they could cross to the Don and thus proceed again to open water. But trade they must, and fight they could. All the countryside was their happy hunting ground and food was abundant.

It is useless to speculate as to the degree in which the Viking penetration affected the Lithuanian people, but certain evidence is extant. The Viking rite of burning their Chieftains in the long boats seems to have been applied in the Lithuanian technique

of burning their Chieftains astride a horse. There are many similarities of speech to be observed in a comparative study of the Scandinavian and Lithuanian tongues but space does not permit an accounting here.

In or about the year 862 A.D., the date which Nestor* sets as the coming of the Viking Chieftain Rurik to become King of the Russians in Novgorod, some of the important cities of Eastern Europe were: Kiev, Chernigov, Smolensk, Polotsk, Izborsk, Pskov, Minsk, Kazan, Novgorod, Suzdal, Azov in the far south and Riga in the north. Several of these cities became Lithuanian cities during the period of great expansion and all knew the force of Lithuanian arms. Kazan served for a time as the capital city for the Tartars. Riga was ever a Latvian city. Izborsk and Pskov had a definitely Estonian character. In Lithuania, at this time, we find only the smaller and less important towns, for the people preferred their estates rather than the cities.

It is well to understand that in the year 862 A.D. a city was usually a large, strong castle or fortress around which clustered the houses and shops of adventurous craftsmen and artisans. In and about the castles would gather a class of fighting men who served their Lords and Masters. In Russia this class became known as the Boyars, an influential group, since they received many privileges along with large grants of land. The birth of Russia, with the shifting of rule from Novgorod to Kiev and ultimately to Moscow, is the background story we must necessarily follow in brief outline because of its threat to and effect upon the Lithuanian people. For a period of several hundred years, the great struggle was between Lithuania and Russia.

Briefly reviewed, the Russian story is as follows: With Rurik, in 862 A.D. came his three brothers, Sineous, Truvor, and Oleg. While King Rurik built his castle and reigned at Novgorod, Sineous ruled at White Lake and Truvor at Izborsk. Apparently they gave the desired rule and order during their lifetime. Prince Oleg assumed the rule when the three brothers died and headed the regency until the majority of Prince Igor, son of King Rurik. The Viking dynasty ruled Russia for 700 years, being succeeded by the Romanovs.

* Nestor records the original invitation as follows: "Our Land is great and fertile; but there is no order in it; come reign and rule over it."

Oleg engaged in military action against the city of Kiev where ruled two Viking friends by the names of Askold and Dir. He was so impressed by Kiev that he exclaimed: "Let us make Kiev the mother of all Russia." If we are to believe certain Hungarian accounts, this Oleg led his bands as far as Hungary where he suffered a severe setback.

In 907 A.D., Oleg marched against Constantinople, according to the Nestorian accounts, and several aspects of this campaign are interesting. In the first place, the Viking King showed the Greeks how to carry boats overland. In the second place, the Greeks made use of fire arrows and poison. Lastly, the treaty was signed by many Vikings, if one can judge by the preponderance of Scandinavian names appearing on the document.

Viking energy was flowing in other directions as well. The years 865, 904, 941, and 1043 A.D. were marked by Viking campaigns against Constantinople and Persia. In 902 A.D., a Viking force landed on the island of Crete; in 825 A.D., they penetrated into Lombardy. In 949 A.D., the Greeks tell of Viking wars against their State. Colonies of Vikings were established in Northern France (from where they emerged in 1066 A. D. as Normans to invade England), in Sicily and Southern France. Viking Chieftains ruled in Dublin for several hundreds of years and frequently landed on the shores of Scotland. Their colonies extended in a northern ring from Norway to America via Iceland and Greenland. Everywhere the Vikings went, they seemed more intent on becoming good colonists than in coordinating any grand European rule.

During this period, life flowed on evenly in Lithuanian lands. In Prussia, Latvia, and Jotvingia as well as in Lithuania Proper, the people bent their backs in good labor and improved their living. They developed a definite skill in agronomy, animal husbandry, and kindred sciences. Their experimentation with various grains appears to have attracted the attention of other scientists and writers, for various references to them are made in later years.

The flax that had been raised in the fields was carefully prepared for further use in the home industry of spinning and weaving. Various designs were worked into clothing, rugs, and decorative materials. Time was required for such laborious effort, but

no one shirked in the Lithuanian household. To this day, the art of weaving is still practiced by the Lithuanian women. Their homespun linens are perhaps the strongest in the world.

Dried fish, dark bread, and sour milk remained their staple diet, although the farmer carefully grew several kinds of vegetables, and also managed to gather mushrooms from the forest and certain fruits in season. The Lithuanian table often boasted a good assortment of honey and sometimes a strong mead. In short, the homelife had remained relatively undisturbed even though traders continued to journey through the country. Apart from spices and salt, the Lithuanian lacked very little of the necessary food items.

Archeologists have uncovered the ruins of early homes, including a vast array of iron cooking utensils dating from the Viking period, as well as an assortment of crockery. The cook stove of the Lithuanian family stood in the very center of the one room house and the smoke found its way out via a hole in the roof directly above. One can readily imagine that it was not too comfortable to sit upon the ground in a room half filled with smoke.

Scientists have uncovered various coins in their diggings and, strangely enough, the coins have an honest weight thus indicating that they were not Roman. Swedish archeologists collaborated with Lithuanian scientists in uncovering a complete fortification system that dates from this early period. The breastworks and trap pits are of the improved styling that would defy all but the most ambitious of foes.

Looking once again at the contemporary Russian history, we see that the Tartars were advancing against the people ruled by the Viking Kings. Igor met his death in 945 A.D. at the hands of the Pechenegs, a wild Tartar tribe dwelling by the Dniester river in the south. He was returning from a campaign against the Greeks. His wife Olga, who has been described as a gracious lady, cultured and religious, is reported to have exacted a dreadful penalty from the Pechenegs. She demanded three doves and three sparrows from each Pecheneg home. She then affixed to the tail of each a firebrand which they forthwith carried back to the home. (This legendary account can claim the origin of the delayed action fire bomb.)



Typical Lithuanian maidens



Raudonė Castle of 14th Century on Nemunas, Built by the Crusaders

King Sviatoslav reigned between the years 964-972 A. D., and appears to have been the most cunning and powerful of the dynasty to date. He waged successful war against the Finns in the north and east as well as against the Tartars, Greeks, and Bulgars in the south and west. Like his forbear, Igor, he met death at the hands of the Pechenegs. His death brought Vladimir to the throne.

King Vladimir seems to have become suddenly ambitious, for he waged war against the Lithuanian Jotvingians in the region about Minsk. The year for this action is 983 A. D. No territorial gains resulted from this initial encounter between the Russian and Lithuanian. Apparently there was little contact between the Jotvingians and the other Lithuanians.

King Vladimir was quite a sensuous fellow and married hundreds of women. This course eventually led him to repentance and he forthwith abandoned them all to take unto himself a Christian wife. He was baptized into the Eastern Orthodox Catholic Church. Oddly enough, he became a Saint and today is known as St. Basil. He accepted the creed of the Christian Church and caused his subjects to throw their heathen idols into the rivers and then to follow them into the streams to be baptized. A magnificent Church of St. Basil stands in Kiev to this day. When he died in 1015 A. D., the people reverently murmured: "Beautiful Sun of Kiev." Thousands of miracles are reported to have occurred at his shrine.

Following the death of Vladimir or St. Basil, various Princes aspired to the throne and a period of internecine warfare ensued. The results of their outmoded patriarchal rule seem to have overtaken the kingdom which was quite loosely welded together. Incidentally, the same patriarchal rule seems to have applied also in Lithuania. The father of the family met at the council table. Certain families had acquired more strength and political power. To these ruling families came the urge to take the lead over the others.

In Russia, the Tartars took immediate advantage of the lack of centralized control and vastly extended their rule. They literally controlled many Russian Principalities. By 1240 A.D., they had taken Kiev and were threatening Lithuania. In 1224 A.D., the Polovtsi Mongols had spread forth like a plague from Askov

to seize all of southern Russia. Such names as the Golden Horde became a well known term in Lithuania during the ensuing period. Tartar Chieftains such as Genghis Khan and Timur were obliged to hold back from Europe because they feared the Lithuanian Legions.

Before we consider further the Lithuanian Golden Age, 1200-1450 A.D., let us look at the seeds of the threat known as the Teutonic Knights. This organization was a direct outgrowth of the Crusades and it is well that we refresh our memories of this tragic development. In the year 1073, the Seljuk Turks had captured the sacred city of Jerusalem (the "eternal city," where Christ had been crucified by the Roman soldiers at the insistence of the Jews) and Pope Hildebrand had just cleaned the great Catholic Church of its moral turpitude and sinful lethargy. The result was that religious men suddenly clamored for Christians to take up arms to drive out the heathen Turk from Jerusalem. Since the knightly remnants of these Crusades sought to visit Lithuania in the early years of 1200 A.D., we shall review each Crusade in turn.

Within the Christian Church the reaction to the seizure of the eternal city of Jerusalem was notable for its heat of emotion rather than for its soundness of spiritual reason. Men of God stood up to denounce the Turk in the strongest fashion and urged speedy retribution for the profaning of the sacred place. They forgot to mention that Jerusalem also held a place of honor in the heart of the Mohammedan and the Jew as well. They thought only of sending armies to cause a readjustment. Their preaching was successful in stirring the lust and ambition of knights and in sending countless other misguided fools to their certain doom. They drained Western Europe of its finest blood, and set the sacred seal on more unwarranted brigandage than the world had seen to date. Let us view the outline of the eight foolish errands.

The First Crusade took place Anno Domini 1096-1100. Pope Urban reigned at the Vatican. In 1094, a certain Peter the Hermit preached vengeance on the infidel who had stolen the sacred city of Jerusalem and profaned the tomb of Christ. Some say that he was deranged. It might well be so and yet when one considers the lack of light, spiritually and mentally, of that time, it is no wonder that such a person should gain the spotlight. Stirred more by feeling than by reason, the Council of Clermont

convened in France and heard the proclamation of a Crusade. Everyone expected the nobility to do the fighting, for that was their avowed profession. However, in 1096, some 600,000 people followed the army of 100,000 mounted men led by Godfrey of Boulogne; Robert, Duke of Normandy; and Robert of Flanders. Many monks, women, and children straggled along. They took the city of Nicea in 1097, and Antioch and Edessa in 1098. The following years they entered the gates of the eternal city and established a Christian State founded, of course, on the feudal principle. Godfrey was given the questionable crown.

In the 47 years that followed, there were intermittent campaigns with desultory fighting. Some cities were lost to the ever pressing Turks and by 1144, Edessa had fallen. It looked as if they would have to start all over again. Incidentally, many thousands lost their lives.

The Second Crusade lasted from 1147-1149 A. D. The Pope was Eugene III. This Crusade was even more formidable than the first and had a better military preparation. Two armies sallied forth. The one was commanded by Emperor Conrad III of Germany, and the second by King Louis VII of France. The passage through Asia Minor was not easy and apparently they lost their way, for many thousands perished while wandering about. The remnant finally assembled at Jerusalem and perhaps wondered why they had ever come. The siege of Damascus was unsuccessful and the leaders quarreled. Disgusted and sick of the whole affair, the soldiers dispersed and made their way home as best they could.

The interval between this Second Crusade and the one which followed was forty years. In the meantime, the great Saladin had come upon the scene. His Saracens were able to make life miserable for all westerners who sought to impose their will upon that part of the world. However, the punch-drunk Church had not learned its lesson and the fever for the eternal city blazed intermittently for many years.

The Third Crusade broke out in 1189 and lasted until 1193 A. D. The Pope at Rome was Clement III. Saladin had died and his kingdom was divided amongst the heirs. Knight errantry burned afresh and we see coming upon the scene such notables as Frederick Barbarossa of Germany, who proved a poor swimmer

(he tried it while clothed in an iron swimming suit), Philip Augustus of France, and Richard the Lion Hearted of England. Accompanying Richard were some 100,000 troopers who were cut to ribbons after the fashion of Asia Minor. The last two worthies arrived by way of the sea, and after spending some anxious moments in Sicily in 1191, they finally set foot upon the Holy Land and stormed St. Jean d'Acre. Philip Augustus showed uncommonly good sense and returned home. Richard the Lion Hearted led the troops to several victories but was unable to regain the eternal city of Jerusalem. He finally concluded a truce and the affair was ended.

We come to the Fourth Crusade which lasted from 1202-1204 A. D. Pope Innocent III presides at Rome. One would think that the Christians had finally learned a lesson but some adventurous lads remained who felt the call to duty (and plunder). A certain Baldwin IX of Flanders seems to have headed this expeditionary force which reached Constantinople and sacked it. He set himself up as Emperor there and, strangely enough, the Empire lasted until 1261 when Michael Paleologus destroyed it with a vengeance. There is nothing of consequence to report on the Crusade.

The Fifth Crusade which took place in 1212 A.D. was the most inhuman of all. Little children were urged to go forth against the host of infidels. It was thought that their innocence would prove mightier than the sword. The result was that they were butchered.

The Sixth Crusade took place from 1217-1221 Anno Domini. It was thirteen years since the Fifth Crusade had dwindled out. The world was stirred by the butchery of the children but lacked the correct proportion of reason to blame the right parties. The leaders of this Sixth Crusade were King Andrew of Hungary, King John of Brienne, and King Hugh of Cyprus. Net results were humiliating defeats and a scorching treaty. It certainly looked hopeless but those "who always remained at home" vowed never to rest until either everyone had been killed (excepting themselves of course) or the victory won.

The Seventh Crusade lasted from 1228-1229 (Pope Gregory IX ruled at Rome). This adventure proved quite conclusively that intrigue within the ranks and amongst the leaders was considered far more important than the winning back of any territory. An-

archy ruled from 1229-1248 A.D. Christians wept over the utter failures of the ventures to date.

The Eighth Crusade lasted from 1248-1254 Anno Domini. (Pope Innocent IV ruled at Rome). King Louis IX set out with his army, muttering vows. He captured the city of Damietta and then lost a campaign to the successive waves of flood and pestilence. Apparently the Lord did not look with favor on these attempts to win back shrines and stones. The King obtained his release by paying an enormous fine (the Mohammedans and brigands were rather enjoying the Crusades). Louis wandered about with his depleted band seeking to repair the various cities which still remained in the hands of the garrisons left behind by other Crusades.

These garrisons were little more than degenerate bands of tramps. On the horizon looms Genghis Khan who tested their steel and then withdrew into the shadows of the night. The Near East can have a most debilitating effect upon the westerner who seeks to tarry.

The Ninth Crusade happened in the year 1270. (Pope Clement IV was at Rome). This Crusade was led by King Louis IX, Charles of Anjou, and Edward, Prince of England.

These men chose the hard route which was to lead along the northern shore of Africa. They lost their fight against the superior forces of plague and pestilence. Silence reigned.

Comment seems hardly necessary. The zeal of the Crusader was not rightly directed. The whole effort lacked cohesion and coordination. Countless lives were snuffed out and a tremendous purge had been effected. The reader can find some well written accounts of the Crusades extant but will invariably be forced to admit that regardless of the fact that Christianity seemed in need of a purge, the whole affair was pitiful.

Some of the pilgrims and Crusaders had lost their lives while wandering through the fields and valleys of Hungary. Peasants who lived along the routes taken by the Crusaders just couldn't be expected to sit quietly by and have these glorified bandits steal their living. It was Christian against Christian. It was plague against Christian. It was infidel against those who managed to set foot upon the soil of Asia Minor. The infidel scouts smiled as

each successive wave entered their domain, for rich plunder and large ransoms promised to reward their zeal in battle.

In our present study, we are interested in this Crusading movement not primarily for the background it lends to the sordid times and the lack of understanding prevalent amongst nations in the dark ages, but rather for the results attendant to the vast movement. Some of the successful Crusaders had brought back plunder and loot. It is said that enough of the original wood from the cross was brought back to have built a good sized sailing vessel for use on the ocean. But it mattered little else than that the wood was from the Holy Land. A stone from the eternal city of Jerusalem would justify many deaths. But most important, the Crusaders had learned the art of organized plundering. They lived by the sword and were anxious to keep right on living by the sword. It is not strange that in the early 13th century, they should be directed against the pagan Lithuanians who lived in peace by the Baltic Sea.

Preceding the drive of the Teutonic Knights from the West and the encroachments of the Livonian Knights from the North, came the traders. By 1111 A.D., these traders had a foothold amongst the Livonians living near the present site of the city of Riga. Indeed, by the year 1200 A. D. they had laid the very foundation for that great city. There is an indication of Danish influence in this region during these days which may have been directly connected with the Hanseatic enterprises. Incidentally, it was quite natural for the Hanseatic merchants to follow the trading routes of the Viking and we find them eventually setting up their offices even at such remote places as Bergen, Norway. Today the visitor can view these interesting offices and living quarters above the store facing the quay. The double set of weights* attests to the inherent dishonesty of these merchants; the light set was used for selling, while the leaded set was used to weigh all incoming materials to be purchased.

During this period, the trade of the Baltic States, to which the Hanseatic merchants were drawn, consisted mainly in furs, amber, wax, walrus tusks, honey, and slaves. Even as the Phoenicians, Frisians, and Vikings had driven hard bargains, so the merchants sought to outwit the natives and vice versa. The visitor to the Baltic region of today will admit that the natives of these countries still drive a hard bargain and love to engage in lengthy haggling

over the price. One rates either high or low according to the ability to outstay the other in the business.

Missionaries often followed in the footsteps of soldiers and traders. These worthy individuals were filled with a zeal to convert the heathen but unhappily had the faculty for causing a great deal of misunderstanding. It was considered an honor to die as a martyr but very often Christian leaders failed to appreciate the fact that vengeance wars often amounted to the mass murder of heathens who might have misunderstood the high motives of these missionaries. The knights were destined to fail utterly in their attempt to convert the Lithuanians by force.

*Still shown at the Hanseatic House in Bergen, Norway.

CHAPTER FOUR
THE GOLDEN AGE OF LITHUANIAN HISTORY
1200-1450 Anno Domini

It should be pointed out that the Hanseatic merchants brought back glowing reports of life in the Baltic States. Adam of Bremen, in a quaint chronicle, wrote that the Prussi and the Sambri were a peaceful and cultured people but not Christian. The Prussians, Lithuanians, Latvians, and Livonians were enjoying their idyllic existence. They hunted, fished, and farmed without benefit of the Christian clergy. Apparently they felt that their old Gods were kind to them. They enjoyed their simple pagan worship beneath the oak trees at Rusne and elsewhere.

Certain missionaries had managed to make their way into the Prussian region and, in 997 A.D., a certain Adalbert met his death. Another by the name of Bruno-Boniface was also killed. Their rulers promptly seized the opportunity to engage in a holy war while plundering in a not so holy fashion. Idle knights should be put to work. The pagan nations must be conquered if the Church was to advance. King Boleslaus was constrained to lead his weary Poles against the Prussians but met with little success.

In the long series of wars that followed, the Prussians were almost annihilated and the Livonian nation practically disappeared. It was a matter of bringing permanent peace to a large number of people. Once unloosed, the murderous knights, who were little more than glorified bandits and gangsters, gradually built for themselves a tremendous State. There were two waves of knights commissioned, one from the region about Riga and the second from Northern Germany. The first was known as the Livonian Order or the Brothers Swordbearers. The second was known as the Teutonic Host or Brothers Crossbearers. Both were murderous organizations with an eye to plunder. They preferred to bring back none alive.

The Papal Bull of 1200 Anno Domini announced to the world that a Holy War was to be waged against the pagan nation of Lithuania. As mentioned above, this meant the Prussians, Lithuanians, and Latvians. Leftover Crusaders began to arrive at the

mouths of two great rivers, namely, the Vistula and the Daugava. At the Daugava river in Latvia, the Brothers Swordbearers, largely composed of Danish knights and others who joined their ranks, were kept busy organizing the Livonians and Latvians. Their original drive seems to have met with a great deal of success. Eventually they were to clash with the proud Lithuanians and be driven back.

The Teutonic Knights or Brothers Crossbearers were formed around a company of knights from Bremen and Lubeck. In the year 1198 A.D., they took upon themselves the ear splitting title of "Order der Ritter des Hospitals S. Marien der Deutschen zu Jerusalem." They had the apostolic blessing and order from the Holy Father in Rome to either win or exterminate the pagan. Their name must have been troublesome to bear upon such a murderous errand. In 1225 A. D. they were joined by a rather unsuccessful Order of Knights which had been formed at Dobrin in the year 1218.

The Order cautiously advanced to consolidate positions at Marienburg and eventually at Koenigsberg. Great fortresses were built at these points, and the surrounding countryside was dominated by the hard riding knights. The Teutonic Knights soon had assembled a formidable array of fighting talent and awaited the signal for the great campaign against the Prussians to begin.

In September of the year 1230, they were armed with a new and complete Papal Bull which gave them full sway over the pagan. The knightly hosts advanced against the Prussians. They systematically attacked the peaceful natives, burning farm homes and murdering men, women, and children. Apparently very little regard was given to any attempt to Christianize them. By 1233 A.D. they were established also at Thorn and Kulm on the Vistula river. By the year 1256 A.D. their work of destroying a nation was complete and the original Prussians had been wiped out. German colonists arrived to take over their farms and to help build such knightly cities as Danzig, Elbing, Koenigsberg, and Marienburg. Perfect peace settled over the land. King Ottokar II of Bohemia had arrived with 60,000 soldiers to be in at the kill.

The Christianizing effort of the Brothers Swordbearers in the North was not quite as devastating. The Brothers Swordbearers evidently carried much more of the Cross spirit, for their mission-

ary work went well ahead in the Livonian and Latvian ranks with large numbers willingly joining the new faith. However, in 1235 A.D., when they met resistance, the Brothers went to work on the pagan enemy in such a thorough going manner that thousands met death.*

Growing ambitious, the Brothers Swordbearers campaigned into Russian territory by the Neva river only to meet Prince Alexander of Novgorod and suffer a reversal. The knightly campaigns against Pskov also met with no success. In seeking to move southward, the Brothers Swordbearers met the Lithuanian sword and retired to the safety of Riga.

The Lithuanians in Lithuania Proper looked forth upon their troubled world of the thirteenth century. They observed the Livonian Knights or Brothers Swordbearers in the immediate North. They observed that the city governments of Pskov and Novgorod were unhappily on the defensive against the knights and not inclined to join them in any war of exterminating the knightly pests. They observed that the aggressive Tartars formed a vanguard of the mighty Eastern Conquerors and threatened them from the south and east. They saw the Teutonic Hordes exterminating their brother Prussians and regretted that they could not bring effective aid to them. The encirclement stirred the Lithuanian nation to action. She looked over her leadership and brought forth great men to serve as Kings and Grand Dukes. She stirred so mightily that the effort was to make her supreme in the greater part of Europe.

The change from a peaceful life to the mighty national effort was made slowly and rather grudgingly by the Lithuanians. They

* The Estonians tell us that King Valdemar II of Denmark came quite unexpectedly to their land. In the summer of 1219 A. D., the great Danish fleet rode at anchor outside of the ancient Estonian city of Kalev. (For full details consult the Estonian National Epic called "Kalevipoeg.") With the aid of an ally, Prince von Rugen, King Valdemar won the battle and promptly consolidated his position on the great hill. He caused a fortress to be built at this place and from this Danish term for citadel "Thamin linna" came the present name of the Estonian capital city, Tallinn.

Other famous Estonian points are Narva, Irbozka, and Tartu. In Narva are found two very interesting fortresses which stand by the fast flowing river, the Narva. The one was built by the Danes and Swedes and known as the Hermann fortress. The other was built by the Russians and is known as the Ivangorod fortress. It was an ideal spot for enemies to glower at one another. At Irbozka, the knights managed to build a strong fortress castle from which they could watch Pskov. At Tartu, the Estonian University was founded in 1632 A. D. by Gustavus Adolphus.

were a "have" nation and did not desire to conquer other people. Their motto appears to have been "live and let live." They asked others to stay away from their domain and they would do the same. They were imbued with a distinctly democratic spirit and, it is interesting to observe, they employed a distinctly democratic procedure to choose their national Chief.

In the year 1226 A.D., succeeding Grand Duke Rimgaudas, came a leader who was called King Mindaugas. The Lithuanians could now be said to have entered their majority and were ready for great events. Armed with a great leader in the person of King Mindaugas, the Legions were made ready for armed conflict. They were prepared to strike swiftly in any direction of threatened attack. Strangely enough a comparative lull ensued, for the encircling enemies did not prefer to tempt the fierce warriors from the oaklands.

Mindaugas turned his attention to the Brothers Swordbearers who had tasted victory against the Latvians in the year 1235 A.D. These knights turned north and eastward, however, so Mindaugas preferred to leave them alone for the time being. At Siauliai, in 1236, the Lithuanians under the leadership of Mindaugas administered a severe defeat.

King Mindaugas was a diplomat, statesman, and military genius. As diplomat, he made several advantageous treaties to keep the eastern foes quiet while he held back those in the west; as a statesman, he administered the affairs of State so skillfully that much progress can be traced to his reign; as a military genius, his skillful maneuvering of troops added to the growing Lithuanian strength. He did not believe in vainly sacrificing lives, however, and sought to make some advances to the Christians in the hope they would recognize Lithuanian rights.

In the year 1250 A.D. he invited the Grand Master of the Livonian Order to his castle at Voruta. Grand Master Andrews accepted the terms and seemed keenly interested in this move by the Lithuanian ruler. In 1251 A. D. Mindaugas, together with his wife, Martha, and their two sons, were baptized. His sons were called Rukelis and Repeika. In July, 1253 A. D., Bishop Henry of Colonia crowned Mindaugas King of Lithuania.

Time passed but the antics and practices of the knightly gentlemen did not change. Warlike expeditions continued to be made

against small groups of Lithuanians living near the border. No authority heeded the pleas of King Mindaugas and he grew disgusted with Christianity that professed loudly while confessing to crime. In an elaborate ceremony, the King rode his charger into the water to wash away the Christian baptism of such doubtful value. He was convinced that Lithuanian paganism was of a higher order than the Christianity of the knights in the 13th century. He was further confused by the apparent differences between the two great branches of the Christian Church, the Orthodox Catholic and the Roman Catholic. Both seemed to despise the other and yet to confess the same tenets.

King Mindaugas turned his attention to the enemies of the East. The Russians were in the travail of internal strife and internecine warfare while assuming the yoke of the Tartar. In the year 1147 A.D., Prince George of the Dolgoruki family had founded the city of Moscow on the river bearing that name. The Tartars had advanced against the city to destroy it in 1238 A.D. By the year 1328 A. D., the ruler at Moscow was to find himself the eldest living descendant of King Rurik. From 1240 until 1500 A. D., the Russians would remain under the Tartar. It was against the Tartar in Ruthenia (White Russia) and the Ukraine that King Mindaugas turned his attention. The Jotvingians were being gradually assimilated into the ranks of the White Russians and Ukrainians. All welcomed the deliverance from the Tartar.

In the year 1263, King Mindaugas found his hands free from foreign trouble in the East and began preparations for a great campaign against the Brothers Crossbearers, whose headquarters were at Marienburg and Koenigsberg. Scouts had brought back the tales of how the knights sought to consolidate their positions in Prussia. However, an assassin reached the side of the King and the war against the knights never took place.

According to custom, King Mindaugas was buried with full pagan honors. The burial service was a cremation ceremony in which the body of the king was mounted on that of his favorite charger. The exact location of the Mindaugas burial place is not known.

Shortly after the death of Mindaugas, the Tartars in Russia accepted Mohammedanism and a fanatical zeal now made them even more dangerous as a foe. To add to the state of chaos exist-

ing in Russia, the Princes and Boyars intermarried with Mongolian women with reckless abandon. Cultural development came to a standstill with the adoption of many strange customs and practices.

Though King Mindaugas was succeeded by several mediocre men, the State of Lithuania had been cast in a firm mold and held together. The Lithuanian Knight had discovered that he was physically stronger and more adept than his neighbor. The Legions were ready to march against any and all foes. It is recorded of Grand Duke Vitenis that he met and defeated the Teutonic Knights at the River Triese. Vitenis was succeeded by the mighty Gediminas. Before continuing the story, a brief synopsis on the succession of grand dukes will serve as a perspective.

Gediminas, 1316-1341. We shall have much to say of this leader. Gediminas was the great war chief, who led the Lithuanian Legions against Moscow and Kiev, and who crushed the knights that dared approach Lithuania during his reign. Gediminas had four daughters and eight sons. On his death bed, he designated his youngest son, Jaunutis, to rule Lithuania, for such was the custom of the time.

Jaunutis, 1341-1345, with an utter lack of color, was deposed by his two elder brothers, Kestutis and Algirdas. Kestutis ruled in the West from 1345-1382, when he was murdered by his nephew, Jogaila, who became King of Poland. Algirdas ruled in the East from 1345-1377, when he died. Jogaila had married the young Polish Queen, Jadwiga, to gain the crown of Poland. He succeeded his father, Algirdas, in the East in the year 1377 and in 1382 conspired to murder his uncle, Kestutis. He intended to kill the son of Kestutis, the young Vytautas, as well, but that young Prince escaped, returning later to claim his right to the Crown of Lithuania.

Vytautas, 1392-1430 A.D. Some rank Vytautas as even a greater King than Mindaugas, Gediminas, Kestutis or Algirdas. Surely the long reign of Vytautas enabled him to consolidate the gains of Lithuania so that its influence would long endure. The craven Russian was so overwhelmed that he would wait until the end of the 18th century before attempting his first invasion of Lithuania.

In presenting the history of Grand Dukes and Kings of Lithuania's Golden Age, we make apologies for the lack of harmonious agreement as to the length of service and exact accomplishments of the men listed. Note, however, the attempt to set forth as truly great the following men: Rimgaudas, Mindaugas, Gediminas, Gestutis, Algirdas, and Vytautas.

It was in the year 1316 that one of the greatest of Lithuanian leaders was chosen to head the State. His name was Gediminas and he was destined to rule for 25 of the most glorious years of Lithuanian history. He was ultimately to be known as *Rex Lithuanorum et Multorum Ruthenorum*.

At the accession of King Gediminas, the Lithuanian Legions were strong. Many of the knights had tempers tested and steeled by actual combat. Many had known the rigors of long expeditions into the eastern territories. It was to be expected that Gediminas would soon propose further military action. Gifted with a superior military prowess, Gediminas pushed the boundaries of his domain from the Baltic to the Carpathian Mountains in the South and from the Bug River in the West to the Dnieper and the Lovat rivers in the East. Lithuania was on the march.

While King Gediminas was in the eastern regions, the Teutonic Knights under the leadership of Charles Befart advanced into Lithuanian territory as far as the city of Kaunas where they took and destroyed the castle which stood at the point of confluence of the rivers Neris and Nemunas. This castle stood at a particularly strategic point on the River Nemunas over which flowed a great deal of the commerce of this day. Being apprized of this turn of events, King Gediminas immediately returned to drive out the knights and restore order in the western portion of the kingdom. The knights withdrew to their strong fortresses in the country now known as East Prussia.

Having evidenced his stout courage and able military skill, King Gediminas now demonstrated his ability as a diplomat and statesman by arranging two very favorable marriages. His daughter Anastasia married the Duke of Tver while daughter Aldona married Prince Casimir of Poland*. Thus Gediminas succeeded in immobilizing two potential enemies while gaining two possible allies.

* Gediminas gave a dowry of 24,000 Polish prisoners on this occasion.

He considered the merits of eastern and western culture very carefully. In the course of years, he took the opportunity of inviting various artisans, craftsmen, agriculturists, merchants, and desirable immigrants to the Lithuanian domain so that his own people might learn something of other cultures. He considered the raiding of the Teutonic Knights with appraising eye and sought to get at the source of the trouble by appealing to the Pope for his intervention. He addressed a letter to Pope John XXII and this document was couched in direct form. A free translation is as follows:

"We war against the Crusaders, not with a view of extinguishing the Christian faith, but in order to defend ourselves against the iniquities done to us. Truly I say unto you that I will let the Christian worship according to his custom, the Russian and the Pole. We, however, will worship the same God in accordance with our customs."

This statement, made in May, 1323 A.D., is deserving of close study. It is a magnificent pagan statement and rather places Gediminas above the average of most Christian Knights of his day and age. These Teutonic Knights, Brothers of the Cross and rapers extraordinary, looked rather sour as they persisted in their work of devastation. Their fine castle at Marienburg and great fortress at Koenigsberg were far too comfortable to lightly surrender, even though the pagan Gediminas seemed on the verge of joining forces with Christendom. The intercessions of Bishop Bartelmy of France and the Bishop of Dorpat apparently were not sincere. Note that Gediminas has observed a difference between the eastern and western Churches.

King Gediminas had his headquarters at the castle of Trakai until the year 1323 A.D. It was during this year that he began the building of the great castle on the River Neris at a point which came to be known as Vilnius. The castle was built on the top of a strategic hill commanding the east - west military highway which in later years was utilized by Napoleon and other great military men. The choice of this position is enough in itself to attest to his military genius. Gediminas understood that any force approaching from the east, around the Pripet marshes, would be forced to the issue at this point if they were to control any section of Lithuania Proper. Vilnius has ever since been considered the capital city and most important point by patriotic Lithuanians.

In connection with the building of this mighty fortress castle at Vilnius, a story is told that King Gediminas dreamed of a mighty iron wolf and the pagan priests interpreted this as a happy omen. Another tale in the same connection was that of the human heart intended for the dedication stone. The stone refused to kill the proposed victim, and again the interpretation given was a happy one: Lithuania should never be crushed.

In the year 1325 A. D., a treaty was signed between Lithuania and Poland which seemed to be the harbinger of the unequal yoke which later was to fasten itself more securely over the two nations. It must be said to the credit of the Poles that they realized how futile were the efforts of the Teutonic knights in seeking to dominate the proud, pagan Lithuanian nation. The Poles therefore turned to more subtle methods which involved intermarriage of royalty and the efforts of the Polish priesthood. The Poles can be excused for their distrust of the Germanic Brothers who were pushing them from the Oder to less favorable positions along the Vistula. There was very little love lost between the Teutonic and Slavic Christian.

At Vilnius, the Lithuanian fire burned brightly upon the pagan altar. Priests officiated at the solemn rites and exerted a considerable influence upon civic affairs. Fierce and terrible were the vengeance oaths against the Teutonic knights. Many Christian Churches in the Realm were destroyed.

Again and again King Gediminas rode at the head of his troops into the far reaches of Russia. He met and repulsed the Tartar Hordes on numerous occasions. Kiev, Polotsk and Chernigov had been brought under the Lithuanian protection. Two sons of Gediminas, Algirdas and Lubartas, married Russian Princesses to add to the collection the provinces Vitebsk and Volhynia. It is said that King Gediminas observed quite dryly that the Black Sea made a fine southern boundary for his realm. Tartars, Russians, Ukrainians, Ruthenians, White Russians, and others paid their tribute moneys. The eastern campaigns kept Gediminas from administering a death blow to the aspiring Teutonic Knights and the troublesome Brothers Swordbearers of Riga. Lithuania became the mighty Empire of Eastern Europe. It must be borne in mind that though the Lithuanian sovereignty over all of these vast regions was unquestioned, that hold was based quite directly upon the willing acceptance of many wild tribes to abide the

rules and pay tribute rather than risk the sure retribution levied on all who preferred to fight. |

All was comparatively calm on the northern front. The Latvians, at times, joined the Lithuanians in fighting against these Brothers Swordbearers of Livonian Knights, but no decisive wars were fought. The influence of the knights seems to have wavered at about a given point in Eastern Latvia and Estonia, and even today we can see the border line of culture, the western portions being definitely superior in every way.

King Gediminas remained on fairly good terms with the Duchies of Pskov, Novgorod, and Smolensk while concentrating his attention on the more dangerous Tartars in the Southeast. The countries then known as Volhynia and Podolia were an integral part of the Greater Lithuania.

Developing within Lithuania was a class of noble knights which were ever ready to take the trail in defense of the country or to engage in any expedition considered necessary by King Gediminas. | A great Churchman of this age once remarked that the people of Europe could be divided into three classes: those who did the fighting, those who did the praying, and those who did the work. It is the latter class which was destined to keep alive the best traditions of Lithuania and, in the homes, to conduct their schools, discussion groups and patriotic societies which eventually would win through all oppression. During the time of Gediminas, the difference between the nobility and peasantry was not great, although noticeable. |

It is said that King Gediminas met his death during the fighting near the Castle of Veliuona which stood near the River Nemunas. He had accomplished something of great good for his country and the people rightly mourned him as their great King. He was buried in pagan fashion astride his charger and this funeral pyre was situated in Vilnius. One can visualize this touching and magnificent ceremony; thousands of loyal Lithuanians reverently standing by while the pagan priests with their crooked staffs and peculiar hats officiated in solemn dignity. To this day, the great hill in Vilnius is known as the Hill of Gediminas and most likely his ashes are interred there.

I have set the date for his death at 1341 A. D. We are told that the youngest son, Jaunutis, ruled for a brief period between the

years 1341-1345. In 1345 A. D., two strong sons headed the kingdom in a dual capacity with Kestutis ruling the western portion and Algirdas the East. It is well that these two sons were strong and able warriors, for the Livonian Order sold their "rights" to the Teutonic Order in the year 1346 A.D., and a concentrated effort to join the forces through Lithuanian territory was made. They were never quite able to draw lines together, for though the Lithuanians suffered the presence of the knights at Klaipeda (Memel), they refused to allow them in or about Palanga.

According to legend, it was near Palanga that Kestutis, sometime before 1350 A.D., paused to view the vestal virgins helping the pagan priests. One of these virgins by the name of Birute attracted his attention and won his love. They were married on a small hill near Palanga and, to this day, Lithuanian army men prefer to be married at this beautiful place. To this union was born the royal Prince Vytautas who was destined to become greatest of the Lithuanian greats. It is recorded that Kestutis had six sons, but Vytautas alone is remembered.

We have noted that the able sons of Gediminas ascended the thrones in the year 1345 A.D. Kestutis held court at his strong castle at Trakai, in the western part of the Greater Lithuania. Algirdas, having married a Russian Princess, and familiar with eastern practice, held court at Vilnius. Joint action was often undertaken during their long period of rule, and the vast Lithuanian domain (Lithuania Proper was estimated to have been one-sixth of the whole) knew war and dominion, peace and prosperity. The long commerce lanes were kept open. Lithuanian Legionaires served in garrisons at various strategic points. On occasions, it was necessary to undertake long marches to enforce the payment of tribute or to meet large movements and concentrations of troops. The Grand Dukes would set up court to receive Ambassadors and Emissaries as well as administer justice. Thus life went on with much color and variation.

Algirdas was the first to die. Six years after he had marched to the very gates of Moscow (June 15, 1371) to receive their solemn promise of allegiance (on which occasion Algirdas left his spear sticking firmly in one of the city gates) the great Grand Duke died and was buried with full pagan honors much after the manner of his father. To the union of Algirdas and the Russian Princess was

born a son by the name of Jogaila and this son now succeeded to his father's eastern kingdom.

Grand Duke Kestutis had rebuilt the powerful Kaunas Castle in the year 1363 A. D. and for a time (1377-1382) he ruled* jointly with his nephew. The scheming Jogaila was not content with a share of the vast domain and, in 1382, invited his uncle to "visit" Vilnius. Apparently there had been some bad feeling between the two, for Kestutis advanced with an army for this visit. Lithuanian accounts tell us how Jogaila employed trickery to capture both Grand Duke Kestutis and Prince Vytautas who was then 32 years of age. Vytautas had often accompanied his father in war, beginning as early as 1365 to campaign against the Teutonic Knights. Grand Duke Jogaila caused both Kestutis and Vytautas to be imprisoned in the dungeons of the Castle at Kreva. Without a trace of conscience or pity, Jogaila murdered his uncle, the aged Grand Duke; Vytautas managed to escape by employing the clever ruse of exchanging clothing with his wife's maid who had been allowed to visit him.

Jogaila (pronounced Yoguyla) was a strange mixture of conceit and cunning. He possessed a vicious temperament and a murdering heart. Strangely enough he found favor in the sight of the Polish courtiers who were seeking a husband for their beautiful young Queen Jadwiga. The offers of Poland were accepted by Jogaila and on February 14, 1386, he was baptized into the Roman Church and crowned King of all Poland. He forsook the city of Vilnius for the more ancient capital city of Cracow since obviously he was now to forsake his Lithuanian birthright. His star gradually sets in the shadows of that far greater glory that was to attend the reign of his more illustrious cousin, Vytautas, whom he had sought to murder. From this point and on Jogaila becomes distinctly a Polish character whom the Lithuanians do not even care to honor.

* Mr. Harrison in his "Lithuania, Past and Present," refers to the Canterbury Tales by Chaucer wherein is recorded an account of the sending of an English knight to Lestowe (Lietuva) and mentions also that in the 14th century, a commercial agreement with England was signed by Kestutis. He mentions also the granting of special favors to a Lithuanian trader by Queen Elizabeth and the following words of this agreement are given: "He, by himself, his Servants, or Factors maye or shall brynge in this Realme of England within the space of one moneth next hereafter following Thyrtye Tymber of Sabels and Carkamet of Gold Sett with Divers Pearles and pretious Stones without paying Customs or Subsidie for the same."

Two very important considerations must be given the defection of Jogaila. For a mess of pottage he had sold the Lithuanian heritage of his great father, Algirdas, and agreed to Lithuania occupying a position of subserviency to Poland. He had promised his youthful Queen Jadwiga that Lithuania would accept the Christian religion.

Vytautas the Great, 1392-1430 A.D., was born to the union of Grand Duke Kestutis and the Vestal Virgin Birute. This marriage had been consummated in the year 1349, since the record shows Vytautas as a man of eighty full years in 1430. The youthful Vytautas evidently was a favorite of his campaigning father, for he was by his side in the battle waged against the Teutonic Knights in 1365. He witnessed the assault upon the fortress of Klaipeda (Memel) and its destruction by Lithuanian soldiers. He had made long journeys into the eastern portions of the great realm to acquaint himself with Lithuanian subjects.

The years between 1382 and 1392 A. D. were full of sorrow. Vytautas had witnessed the murder of his own father by his cousin Jogaila. Full of fierce thoughts of vengeance, he had escaped the wrath of Jogaila in 1382, and made his way to the far western part of the Lithuanian kingdom. Here he conspired with the Teutonic Knights to win back his Grand Dukedom. The Knights were willing to back his claim apparently, for certain records show that Vytautas advanced against Jogaila with them. The practices of the Knights seem to have soured him on the scheme, however, and Vytautas ordered them to return.

Ten years later, he gathered various Lithuanian Chiefs at Ostrava where he was solemnly proclaimed the rightful Grand Duke of all Lithuania. Jogaila, at this time, seems to have been fully occupied with Polish affairs at the city of Cracow. Vytautas advanced on Vilnius where he proclaimed his return as Grand Duke.

Strangely enough, he seems to have forgiven his failing cousin and definitely set aside any thoughts of vengeance. He turned his attention to various problems that had been for a time forgotten. The wily Tartars had advanced in certain places and some fighting had ensued. Though singularly successful against various foes, Vytautas did err in underestimating the Mongolian strength in the year 1399 when, at Vorkala, his forces met with a reversal. The warriors of the Great Horde could indeed fight well.



(This painting is or was, one of the many in Karo Muziejus, Kaunas.)

Vytautas the Great at the Black Sea

Cast in the mold of a fighter, Vytautas could be expected to range far and wide. He marched his troops to the very doors of Pskov, Novgorod, Moscow, and other far flung points. On one occasion, he rode his charger proudly into the Black Sea to proclaim himself Lord of the Seas. One can forgive the great campaigner for this vanity when we consider that great Lords were repeatedly prostrating themselves at his feet. All loved the fearless fighter and recognized him as a military genius.

On November 2, 1398, a large gathering of monarchs and their representatives assembled at the court in Vilnius* to witness the coronation of Vytautas as King of Lithuania. Polish historians are prone to overlook this incident or make an attempt to claim that it lacked the usual formula. They place a great deal of emphasis upon the very evident desire of Vytautas in later years to get the crown from Emperor Sigismund, the ruler of the Roman Empire.

Cities in which King Vytautas was received as a Conqueror were: Kiev, Pereyaslavl, Chernigov, Lyubetch, Smolensk, and Polotsk. Added to this list should be places within such Grand Duchies as Moscow, Pskov, Novgorod, which paid tribute regularly, and the Tartar centers, which did not pay without encouragement. No mention is made of the Lithuanian Legions crossing the Carpathian Mountains. Apparently they did not choose to drive the Poles from the region of the Vistula, nor the Czechs from Moravia. Later mention is made of an appeal by the Pope requesting them to subjugate the Bohemians for their heretical activities; but King Vytautas, Grand Protector of Catholic Rights in Eastern Europe, did not see fit to war against them. (The Pope appointed him to the rank of Protector in view of his Catholic activities and military abilities).

The Christian Church took immediate advantage of the invitation extended by King Vytautas. Monks, priests, and religious teachers journeyed to Lithuania to bring the Gospel story to the rather bewildered people. Nobody seemed to think that Mr. Average Peasant had the least possible interest in anything going on; they merely should accept whatever was thought best for them. I mention this to illustrate just how it was possible for them to

* Count Kyburg is listed as a visitor at the court of Vytautas in the year 1397 A. D. On this occasion, he is said to have observed that the Lithuanian tongue was a most difficult one to understand.

coast along without being unduly affected by the Reformation and to invoke certain blessings from the old Gods even to this day.

The Church seems to have made several concessions to the old religion. They retained certain marks and rites that they thought were advantageous. The towers on several churches built during this early fifteenth century period were of hexagonal or octagonal shape. Heathen altars were moved into Christian churches. No attempt was made to erase a veneration for the sun, moon, and stars and their images were included in the Lithuanian cross. Various processions very much like those of pagan times were now used by the newly converted Lithuanian Catholic Church.

One of the early churches was situated at Zapyskis. A story is told how a great storm broke over the countryside forcing every living thing to take cover. A large stag was caught in the flood of the Nemunas river and managed to swim to the church. Lugged in his horns was a very elaborate ikon which was ultimately placed upon the altar.

The great pagan shrine at the foot of the Hill of Gediminas at Vilnius was converted into a Christian cathedral and the attention of Lithuanian worshippers directed to the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This action served as an example for the great work of extending the Christian services throughout the land. King Vytautas observed the enthusiasm of the Catholic priests and religious workers. He encouraged them in every way possible and hoped that the cultural level of his people would be immediately raised. Large numbers of people were baptized in rivers which assumed the name of Sventoji (Holy Rivers). Churchmen were given the opportunity of regulating schools and education.

Only one disadvantage remained; this work was conducted mostly by the Polish clergy who gazed rather contemptuously upon the Lithuanian people. Furthermore, these men of the Church came to Lithuania with an avowed purpose of Polonizing these people while dispensing the benefits of the True Faith. Their chauvinistic enterprise was most efficacious among the Lithuanian nobility or knighthood who seemed to have been particularly impressed with the superior Polish manners and culture. For a long

time, this very important development went on unobserved by those who had the welfare of Lithuania at heart.

King Vytautas viewed the work with careful eye though failing to divine the insidious purpose in the hearts of the non-Lithuanians. He was impressed by the array of learning that had assembled. He encouraged the artisans and craftsmen to ply their trades. He said to himself that all was well, and forthwith betook himself to strengthen the defenses of the vast Lithuania of this 15th century.

In July 1410, King Vytautas advanced with a huge army against the Teutonic Knights, who were pressing in from the West. Allied to the Lithuanian host were Poles and other fighting men. Near Gruenwald, the first great battle of Tannenberg was fought. So ably did King Vytautas deploy his forces that the knights gave way. Tartar allies aided him by slashing mercilessly at the knightly ranks. The defeat turned into a rout when they broke and made for their great castle at Marienburg.

King Vytautas was satisfied with this complete victory, but the Poles under Jogaila are reported to have pursued the knights to the Marienburg fortress which they besieged for several months without success. In his refusal to waste men and time in fruitless siege, King Vytautas evidenced his military understanding. He knew that the strength of the Lithuanian Legions lay in their greater maneuverability and skill in the field.

Having removed the Teutonic threat in the West, King Vytautas lost no time in consolidating the eastern positions. In greater Lithuania, he met friend and foe amongst the vast throng of White Russians, Ukrainians, Great Russians from Moscow, Novgorod, and Pskov, and Tartars from the southern steppes.

Vytautas taught his subjects that mercy should ever temper firm action. He encouraged everyone to bring their troubles before qualified Judges and often presided over the court. He also advised the Lithuanian representatives to meet in Diets. One Diet, held in the year 1401 at the city of Vilnius, apparently concerned itself with various problems relative to Lithuanian-Polish accord and prepared the way for a better understanding between the two nations.

In the year 1413, the Treaty of Horodle was signed by Lithuania and Poland. According to the terms of this Treaty, the

Lithuanian knighthood were considered to be of the same quality as the Polish nobility. This insidious arrangement had been made by the wily Poles to lull the virulent Lithuanian fighters into a softening mold. It worked, and we note a gradual decline of the fighting Lithuanian spirit. As time went on, many Lithuanians failed to recognize their Lithuanian heritage, and presented themselves as Polish nobles.

People sang forth the praises of Lithuanian arms for some time after that fateful year 1430 A. D. which marks the death of Vytautas. New songs of military exploits were composed and became national property. Lithuanian soldiers returning from the land of the Black Sea or the Duchy of Moscow, brought spoils and told great stories. The tales caught the fancy of storytellers and songmakers who added a bit here and there to make a well rounded legendary account. Nevertheless, it was good propaganda and the national pride of Lithuania during the days of Vytautas was at its crest.

Vytautas, Grand Duke and King, led his troops against certain rebellious Tartars during the years 1424 - 1427. The Tartars had lost their brilliant Timur and gave way before Vytautas. Broken at last was their great power over Russia, and we see emerging under such leaders as Ivan the Terrible and others, the great hulking combination known as Great Russia which ultimately would devour, as a huge bear, those smaller peoples who were unfortunate in their choice of positions.

In the year 1430, when a full eighty years of age, Vytautas rode forth with his troops to penalize the revolting Novgorodians. An embellishment of this story is to the effect that Lithuanian troopers employed such a huge cannon that the rebels of Novgorod took fright and promised immediate payment of the tribute money.

Of this great warrior King, the Encyclopedia Britannica says: "Vytautas was certainly the most imposing personality of his time in Eastern Europe, and his martial valor was combined with statesmanlike foresight." (Vol. 28, p. 762.)

Perhaps the greatest weakness (or strength) of this great Lithuanian leader was his forgiving spirit. He forgave his cousin Jogaila who had murdered his father Kestutis. He readily forgave

the worthy foes who had come against him in battle. He forgave rebellious nations and admonished them to live thereafter in peace. Too often those who had received mercy from his hand conspired against him.

During Vytautas' reign of almost forty years, Lithuania witnessed a great deal of building. Cities were experiencing the benefits of the long and sustained peace which the strong Lithuanian rule afforded. Commerce was good and many traders, merchants, bankers, artisans, and craftsmen flocked into Eastern Europe. Russians, Ukrainians, Tartars, Germans, Poles, Jews, and others were found in the long listing of Greater Lithuania citizenry. All were treated with a respectful tolerance. Such was the strength of this Greater Lithuania that it actually kept its semblance of form until the great divisions of 1772, 1793, and 1795; long after Lithuanian control had passed away.

In the year 1430 A.D., the great Vytautas lay dead in the capital city of Vilnius. History tells us that he had sought desperately for that crowning recognition at the hands of Emperor Sigismund. It adds that Polish intrigue had prevented the ceremony by adroitly stealing the crown while it was enroute to Lithuania. This ceremony could have added little to the lustre of his greatness. Vytautas had justly earned the title Vytautas the Great. His body was interred in the Catholic Cathedral of Vilnius where it remains to this day. His was a Catholic majesty. He had served country and Church well during his long reign and he left both in a very preferred position.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERIM BETWEEN THE GOLDEN AGE AND THE UNION WITH POLAND, 1430-1650 A.D.

King Vytautas died on October 27, 1430, and it seemed that the spirit of Lithuania grew suddenly weary. While the rest of Europe was preparing to wake up from the horrible nightmare of the Dark Ages, Lithuania sadly set her house in order to accept the Polish influence. The fault for this choice has generally been placed to the discredit of the nobility who deliberately chose to be more Polish than Lithuanian, and who quite supinely procrastinated in matters affecting independence.

The colossal empire that had been won by hard riding Lithuanian Knights stood limply at attention. Tributes were no longer to be demanded of Vitebsk, Pskov, Novgorod, Smolensk, Mohylev, Chernihov, Kiev, Poltava, Kaluga, Kherson, Volhynia, Minsk, Gardinas, and Podlase. No longer did Khans, Kings, Emperors, Grand Masters, and other dignitaries feel the necessity of calling at Vilnius to pay their respects to the Lithuanian monarch.

King Vytautas had died without issue. His immediate kinsmen viewed the throne of Lithuania with envy but could agree on no one strong candidate with conclusive claims to priority. The compromise successor to the throne was killed in the ensuing civil war and the second King chosen was assassinated. We shall review the list of Lithuanian Grand Dukes and Kings. (They invariably accepted the proffered crown of Poland thus weakening the Lithuanian rule.) The list is as follows:

Svitrigaila ruled from 1430 - 1432. He was killed in the civil warfare.

Sigismund I ruled from 1432-1440. He was assassinated.

Casimir ruled from 1440-1492. Note length of rule.

Alexander ruled from 1492 - 1506. Warred against Russian and Tartar.

Sigismund II ruled from 1506 - 1544. A lawmaker, he caused revision of Lithuanian Statutes.

Sigismund Augustus ruled from 1544-1572. Preferred to sell his people to Polish unity.

Following this list of Lithuanian Grand Dukes who sat upon the Polish throne we observe that the Poles looked to France for a successor to Sigismund Augustus in the year 1572. They had apparently tired of depending upon their Lithuanian allies and preferred to forget the office of Grand Duke. Henry de Valois of France was crowned in the year 1574, and after six months fled the country in disgust. The Poles then chose a Transylvanian, who gave them what they needed; blood and thunder. His name was Stefan Batory, and he is rightly considered one of their hero Kings. His rule extended from 1576 - 1587 when his successor, Sigismund III, was chosen. Sigismund was of Swedish-Lithuanian origin and ruled until 1648. His successor was Jan Kazimierz, who ruled from 1648 - 1668 and put down the Lithuanian revolt against Polish rule, led by Prince Radvila.

Since we are looking forward to the date of the final Russian invasion of 1795 A.D., we observe that 365 years separate that year from the date of the death of Vytautas the Great. The year 1572 marked the end of continuous Lithuanian occupancy of the Polish throne, though some writers emphasize the year 1569 when the Union of Lublin was consummated. I mention these dates to illustrate the character of the Lithuanian-Polish State. Two governments under one King ruled the country and grew weak together. Never free from distrust, internal unrest, and mutual dislike, the ill-advised union had only one good result; it did allow the Catholic Church to have full sway in both countries.

Some Lithuanian critics have deplored the fact that King Gediminas, King Algirdas, and King Vytautas drove their fast charging knights into the far reaches of the great Eastern European lands, while allowing Prussia to be lost, and refusing to make a thorough going union with Latvia. They point out that the White Russians, Ukrainians, Tartars, and Muscovites outnumbered the Lithuanian conquerors almost nine to one. They claim that a Polish softened Lithuania could not hold an Empire together nor even watch over its own safety.

The Lithuanian monarchs had invited artists and artisans into their realm. They had encouraged monks, friars, and religious teachers to instruct their people in the better way of life. They had

encouraged tradesmen to regard Lithuania as a desirable vantage point for commerce. All of this temporary gain was now set aside with the passing of Lithuanian greatness. Trade flowed to more vital parts of Europe. Artists and artisans sought other places to labor. Monks, friars, priests, and professors preferred to abide with the nobility and forgot the laboring Lithuanian. Thus can be summed up the story of the 365 years.

The Poles were deliberate in the work of destroying the Lithuanian State. They accomplished in peace what the combined forces of the Teutonic Knights, Russians, and Tartars had failed to do. They were aided in their work by a fiercely chauvinistic clergy which remained steadfastly Polish while administering the affairs of the Church. They were aided by the Lithuanian upper class who, gradually adopting Polish ways, allowed their Diets to degenerate into merely deliberative bodies, and considered the Lithuanian peasant first as serf and then as part of the soil. Strangely enough, the Lithuanian farmer (whether others called him peasant, serf, or slave mattered not) kept his faith and stolidly set himself to endure through every trial. He became strong in adversity. He was destined to overcome those who sought to harm him.

An edict, issued in the year 1501, virtually made a serf of the peasant. No longer was he allowed to wander about in search of more advantageous employment. He was required to remain on the estate as a part and parcel of the same. If the ownership of the land changed the serfs were considered an integral part of the transaction.

Regardless of his poor estate and his loss of position, the Lithuanian peasant never lost faith in Lithuania. Though bewildered occasionally by the changes wrought about him, he fastened himself the more securely upon the land that he loved. He did understand certain fundamentals of liberty and conscience. Though refused a voice in the Seimas, he held a torch flame high in his heart and of him it could truly be said: "Kas bus, kas nebus, O Lietuvis nepražus." Come what may, the Lithuanian will never perish.

A glorious chapter was written by these unsung heroes of the dark days. They would survive through each succeeding period of oppression even though the gloom closed more threat-

eningly about them. Consider for a brief moment the amazing vitality of this true Lithuanian, the peasant. He was deeply rooted in his beloved soil. It sustained him. It supported his home. It held forth a promise of all that he needed for his daily food. He carefully tended his fields and watched over his flocks while the upper classes wrangled about measures which held very little interest for him.

He wandered to Church on Sunday but was very little affected by the services in religion, since for him intimate contact was lacking. In a manner, it was indeed fortunate that the Polish priests who served Lithuania took more interest in the nobility and liked the ways of ease. The peasant said his prayers and let it go at that. The Church would baptize and bury him. It assured him the rewards that attended a faithful son, and what more could he ask? He gave of this means to support the top-heavy structure and received the privilege of attending mass and confession. Beyond that he cared very little.

So the Lithuanian farmer remained close to the earth and found a delight in his flower garden. Even to this day, one will invariably find many flowers growing in the gardens. When prosperity smiled upon him, he would improve his home with more color by managing to gather some colored glass for the front porch. There was little color to enjoy when peasant became serf; times were hard then and his status not so pleasant. Even so—one could live long and well on peasant bread, and sour milk.

He loved to work with the soil since it always promised so much in return. He loved to wander in the forest for the game he was allowed to take and the firewood he could gather for the long winter nights when, together with his family, he would enjoy the home hearth. It is understandable that, with the Church so far removed, the farmer's family would recall the tales of Perkunas, of Medeine, and the other Lithuanian deities. It is no wonder that when Perkunas spoke, the humble peasant involuntarily offered an expiatory prayer, lest he be found guilty of having forgotten the ancient Gods who had watched over Lietuva so long and so well. It is little wonder that in his artistic endeavors he included the signs of the sun and moon with the Cross of Christ.

Someone has written that true happiness is often found in the simple things of life. This was true in the case of the Lithu-

anian peasant. He knew the joys of simple life and remained strong. He preserved the marks of his culture, his language, his music, his art, his religion. He persevered through the lengthy eras of servitude and won.

In 1918, the patriots, with gifts of oratory, merely fanned a blaze that had always existed in the breast of the true Lithuanian. Russia is indeed foolish if she thinks that Lithuania will ever find a permanent home in her Union. Germany is mistaken if she believes Lithuania can be content without freedom. The son of Vytautas has not forgotten that he is a Lithuanian and of a different breed than the Slav and the German. He knows that he can never countenance a debilitating union with the arch enemy, Poland. Lithuania does not feel that she has a place within any large nation, and she desires only her freedom.

If we were to look within the home of a Lithuanian peasant of the year 1450 A.D. we would very likely see the mother at the loom preparing the yarn and the materials for much needed clothing. Since self-sufficiency was imperative, it was necessary to prepare the flax for weaving. Little daughters would aid their mother in this essential occupation. Perhaps the father and sons would busy themselves, when not engaged in the fields, with fixing furniture or carving religious objects.

Generally there was work to be done outside. Some of the Lithuanian names for the months indicate what occupation is most necessary. One month, Rugsejis, indicates that rye planting or sowing is in order. Then, too, there was the roof to mend, and the stork's nest to prepare, as well as countless other tasks that farmers find to do. The barns were carefully kept in order since the live stock meant so much to their owners. In fact the animals very often had quarters that, in comfort, approximated those of the owner. These rural folk lived an active life and consequently attained strong muscles and good health.

On Sundays and holidays, the Lithuanian peasant had an opportunity to wear the brightly colored native costumes which had been so laboriously prepared by the women. Woven into intricate and beautiful patterns were the Lithuanian tears of joy and thus to our very day is preserved the striking evidence of originality. The Lithuanian peasant loved bright colors and would have them in the costumes of the women especially. Some of

these dresses are extremely beautiful. It is said that one can tell from what part of Lithuania you come by the design and coloration of the dress. There are dresses from Zemaitija, Suvalkija, Vilnius, and so on. The skill of the weaver was employed in many different articles which went to fill hope chests for the maidens and to fill the needs of the household. Some of the native linens were so well made that they would last for generations with proper care.

The Lithuanians grouped themselves in tiny clusters near an agricultural core. The farmers thus were able to enjoy a greater amount of protection and sociability. The latter was particularly needful, for winter days were short and people grow lonely without social intercourse. This grouping of houses together for mutual benefit enabled the young people to join hands in play and the parents to enjoy bargaining for marriage contracts. Not always were the heart arguments heeded, but in the main, the ends were served.

Sometimes a dance would be held under the guidance of the village musician. Violins would play and accordions would chant. At these gatherings, one could have witnessed the execution of the intricate Lithuanian folk dances which had been handed down from parent to child. Ambitious oldsters would occasionally reel off a rapid swing to the delight of the group. It was a time of merriment when the cares of the day or season could be momentarily sloughed off. Occasionally the party grew rowdy when drinking was prolonged, and old feuds would start afresh. All in all, these small settlements served to keep together the very sinews of the mighty nation which has defied time.

As time went on, the nobility increased their holdings at the expense of the peasant. Estates grew ever larger, and greater acreage was set aside as hunting preserves. It was unlawful to take game in such happy hunting grounds, and the sole pleasure that might be gleamed by the children of the peasants was to watch noble hunting parties engaged in the chase. The farmers living near such places were forced to exercise a great deal of vigilance lest the predatory animals, such as the wolves and foxes, would take too great a toll of their limited numbers of live stock. Poaching was punished but nevertheless practised. No doubt



"How happy were the days under the thatched roof where I was born."



Vytautas the Great

there were Lithuanians who might well have been called Robin Hoods of their day.

So the rich (nobility) grew richer and the poor (peasants) had children. The cleavage between the two classes became broader. It was a disunited nation in the year 1500 A.D. An old saying which had not been forgotten by the Lithuanian peasant read something like this: "Lietuva yra miškuose. Kirskit miškus, iškirskit miškus nebus Lietuvos — kirskit, kirskit." The translation reads: "Lithuania can be found where there is forest. Cut down the trees and the forest, and Lithuania will be no more. Cut down, cut down." The nobility were feverishly prosecuting this work of removing Lithuania, but the peasant would not be changed or moved. Such perseverance would surely if slowly be rewarded and promised something for the future.

Immanuel Kant, the great German scholar, once observed in his Preface to Mielches' Dictionary: "Lithuania must be preserved, for her tongue possesses the key which opens the enigmas not only of philology but also of history," and Elisée Réclus writes: "If the value of a nation in the total sum of humanity were to be measured by the beauty of its language, the Lithuanian ought to have the foremost place amongst the nations of Europe." (Geographie Universelle, Paris.)

An interesting record of the Lithuanian export for the year 1467 A.D. states that some 2000 poods of wax were sent to neighboring countries. Now this happens to be a lot of wax, and from the report we can infer that the gathering of honey occupied a greater proportion of some peasants' time than agricultural pursuits. Apparently the lanes over which the Phoenicians, Frisians, Vikings, and Hanseatic merchants traveled were still open. Salt and spice would be brought into Lithuania to be exchanged for wax, amber, furs, and fish. The dearth of official records forces us to speculate upon the true condition of trade and industry during this period. There remain the rather obscure references in contemporary history to the trade with Lithuania; for example, the reference to Leetuwe (Lietuva) found in "Canterbury Tales," by Chaucer.

During this period from 1430-1650 Anno Domini, we shall note, in addition to the Lithuanian-Polish problems, the rise of Russia, the Reformation movement from Germany, and the military suc-

cess of Sweden. All of these movements stirred Lithuania, but passed over and beyond. Strangely enough, the people of Lietuva were able to so isolate and insulate themselves, that they became a forgotten nation. First let us look at Russia.

Ivan the Third (1452-1505), the descendant of the old Viking (Varangian) King Rurik, had settled himself securely in his court at Moscow. He deserves the title Great, for he not only ruled long and well, but was most active in establishing the rule of the Muscovite over a large portion of the land. In studying Russian history of this period, we are impressed with the scope of the territory over which the armies under Ivan found it necessary to travel. They sought out a nomadic enemy, the Tartar, and by 1480 had succeeded in administering such a series of blows that the Tartar threat passed forever. The consolidation process gradually set in and today the name Tartar is remembered in the phrase: "Scratch a Russian deep enough and you will find a Tartar."

Russia had come by a large inheritance of talent when the Ottoman Turks, who began their peregrinations from Azov in 1250 A.D., culminated their effort by capturing the city of Constantinople in 1453 and pushing on into Europe. They were to affect the life and happiness of Europe in no uncertain fashion and for some time. Greek scholars and Orthodox priests came into Russia together with refugee physicians, artisans, and the like. The Jewish merchant had blazed a trail from the time around 800 A. D., when an adverse Arab decree had forced him to migrate from his natural haunts. Today we find many thousands of them gathered in Eastern Europe, especially in the western regions around Galicia, Southern Lithuania, Bessarabia, and in all the large cities such as Kiev, Odessa, Cracow, and Warsaw.

The eyes of Tsar Ivan were directed towards the Baltic Coast and he carefully pushed his influence towards this door to Europe. The desire to approach the western markets was quite naturally born to the ruler of an empire resting securely on territory lying partially in the Orient and partially in the Occident. Tsar Ivan regarded the Republics (if this is the correct appellation) of Novgorod and Pskov with envy and greed. He was a realist and knew that eventually they must become a part of the Muscovite realm.

Lithuania remained a very definite threat, even as did the rapidly rising power of Sweden. Both were far too strong for open

conquest and so the Russian bided his time, seeking only an occasional test of strength.

Ivan was a terror in many respects and forced the acceptance of absolute rule upon the nobility consisting of Princes and Boyars.* When one grew obstreperous he was removed by the simple rules of liquidation for which Russia has always been famous. Had he not been superseded by his grandson, Ivan the Fourth, in terrorism, Ivan the Great might well have been remembered by that title. He was not a brave man but he proved himself an artist in diplomacy. In 1478, his stalling about payment of tribute to the Tartar Khan had brought down upon his head the vengeance of that great monarch, who advanced against him from Khazan with a formidable host. Then ensued a peculiar battle. The two forces met at the River Oka and after a brief moment of facing one another, both broke ranks to literally flee from the battlefield without firing a shot. The year was 1480 Anno Domini. The advantage remained with Ivan for they had not been forced to pay tribute.

Vassilli succeeded to the throne. By 1523 A.D. the cities of Novgorod and Pskov had come under the mantle of Moscow. They paid a certain amount of tribute occasionally but this payment was a source of tension between the two city states. In 1533 Tsar Vassilli died and there followed a period when the young Tsar, Ivan the Fourth, was maltreated by his own court.

In 1543 A.D., at the tender age of 13, he had noted that his signature was required for all official documents and that his word was law. He gave way to a sudden fit of anger on one occasion and had a leader of his nobility torn to pieces by dogs before the assembled court. It was his gentle way of announcing that henceforth all would obey him.

Four years later, he was acknowledged by all as the real Tsar of Russia. Apparently the death of his young wife Anastasia caused him to grow more bitter and his rule became a nightmare. The tiger of Russia had grown up.

The Prince of Novgorod received an interesting despatch on the 24th of February, 1556. It read, in effect, as follows: Be ad-

* The Russian title of Boyar was conferred upon one who served as bodyguard and chief warrior to a Prince. They acquired property and rose to positions of authority.

vised in your city of Novgorod, its suburbs and other places, to advertise (with promptness) that sons of boyars shall not sell German prisoners to the buyers from Livonia nor Lithuania, but rather shall they send these prisoners to Muscovite towns for selling. Ivan further promised to bestow favors upon any son of a boyar who would inform him of any violation of this decree or, if the man were a "base fellow," he would receive 50 roubles (taken, of course, from the accused). He goes on to say that any German prisoner who might know the art of treating silver ore, gold, copper, or tin, should be brought to Moscow for Ivan's personal attention.

Apparently Ivan the Terrible wished to have as many artisans as possible and would appreciate them even when forced to steal them away from boyars. He encouraged the English traders who came by the way of the White Sea, but "Old Terrible" proved a Tartar on the matter of guaranteeing rights of monopoly. It just couldn't be done, and Ivan made it clear that he wished to collect tolls for all traffic going through his borders.

He managed to get in contact with a certain gracious lady of England and requested her hand of Queen Elizabeth. This request followed the signing of a profitable trade agreement between England and Russia, so the proposal of this original "John Alden" was conveyed to the lady of high estate. This young lady went into a fit, however, at the prospect of spending her days in dark Russia with the Terror. (Wise lady indeed.) Soothing English letters cooled the boiling Muscovite wrath.

Trouble brewed in other portions of Europe. The Saints of Bartholomew were honored in the tremendous massacre of 1572 by the sadists of France. Incidentally, some Huguenots went eastward to volunteer in the employ of the Swedes, Lithuanians, and Poles, who were then warring against Russia. Before the Terrible One died in the year 1584, he was treated to a typical incident of the age. An adventurous convict by the name of Yermak escaped from a Muscovite concentration camp of that era. He made his way to Siberia where he managed to organize a band of outlaws with which he extended a form of rule over a large portion of cold and colorless Siberia. Through forests to the rim of the tundra country, Yermak made his way. He sent messengers to the Tsar at Moscow proclaiming the regions won as Russian, and hoping for amnesty as a reward for his action.

Quite likely the Tsar extended his rule theoretically and named Yermak to some position such as Governor of the Territory. Yermak would, of course, realize that any word given by Ivan could be revoked in a moment of anger.

Ivan the Terrible took the life of his own son. This small lad was the last remaining child by Anastasia, the only legal wife he had. It is true that Ivan had just lost his terrible temper and perhaps had only intended to stun him. The blow, however, was too stout and with the demise of Ivan's son went the rapidly deteriorating line of Rurik. This took place in 1581 A. D., and three years later Ivan the Terrible died unmourned. Today some Russians would have us believe he was not quite the monster that history paints him.

The passing of Ivan ushered in an era of anarchy in Russia. Princes vied one with another. Pretenders from Poland and ambitious boyars muddled the political situation. Finally, in 1613 the first of the Romanovs made his appearance on the throne of Russia to give some semblance of order. The Lithuanian threat had passed. The Tartars had been absorbed. In a short time, the Russian began to look up under the leadership of Peter the Great. Shortly before this, the Cossacks had chosen to follow the Russian Tsar in preference to the Catholic Polish King.

We turn from this short review of Russian history with the thought that events in the East so vitally concerned Lithuanian history. Lithuanian action of the sixteenth century was in conjunction with Poland and quite ineffectual. It lacked direction. It might be said of Lithuania that during these times she steered a national course in the manner of Columbus who "sailed, he knew not where; to arrive at an island he didn't recognize; and to return from a land he couldn't adequately name." Lithuania slowly considered her fate. Her Grand Dukes had consistently felt the urge to serve as the King of Poland at Cracow.

Grand Duke Casimir had served his country well from 1440 to 1447, when the Polish bid for his services was made. The Lithuanian Diet, convening at Vilnius, warned him against accepting the offer. There was a fear, held by a majority of the Diet (Seimas) members, that the continued service of Lithuanian Grand Dukes in the role of Polish King would be detrimental to the Lithuanian cause. However, Casimir couldn't withstand the temptation of

added glory so easily achieved, and in 1448 made his way to Cracow to receive the Polish crown.

In the year 1492 the Lithuanians chose Alexander as their Grand Duke. For a time it seemed that there might be a resurgence of the warlike Lithuanian spirit. Alexander led his legions against the Russians and Teutons with marked success. The Poles viewed the situation with alarm and, though they hated to be so dependent upon their non-Slavic ally, could do nothing else than take the road of clever diplomacy and offer their crown to a Lithuanian. On October 4, 1501, Alexander became the King of Poland in addition to being the ruler of the Lithuanian empire.

In the year 1544, Sigismund Augustus was elected Grand Duke of Lithuania. In 1548 this ruler made the usual choice and became the King of Poland in addition to his other duties. By this time, however, the Polish diplomats and the nobility of both countries were speaking of the advisability of dropping the title Lithuanian Grand Duke. They argued that it would be mutually advantageous if the ruler symbolized more complete unity. The Union of Lublin was not far off.

Certain Lithuanian dissenters did exist and did have a voice. In fact, the dissenters apparently had the greater amount of wisdom as subsequent events have shown. Radvila leads the list of Greats who believed that Lithuania should assume greater responsibilities in this age of discovery with its emphasis upon Humanism. Arguments of expediency prevailed and good intentions went glimmering under the influence of a lackadaisical nobility and an attentive Church. Lithuania was to be merely a part of Poland though she supplied the dynasty for that country.

It is perhaps accurate to speak of the State as being Litho-Polish from now on. The armies were composed largely of the fighting nobility who were so intermarried that it became increasingly more and more difficult to say accurately whether a noble was Pole or Lithuanian. These armies were led by a Lithuanian monarch who pressed his will and rule upon all portions. The increasing might of the Muscovite was felt and trouble brewed in the west.

In 1483 A.D. Martin Luther was born in Germany, a man whose teachings would eventually stir all of Europe from the Middle Age lethargy and cause a surging of national pride and prejudice

that would last forever. Lithuania was to feel the influence of this movement but would remain firm and fast in the ranks of the Catholic Church, obedient to her vows.

It is well to remember the date October 31, 1517, whether we be Catholic or Protestant, for it marks a significant date when began a great conflict within the Church, which resulted in a tremendous benefit to Christianity through the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. Both of these movements affected Lithuania in greater or less degree. It is an interesting commentary to the whole story that the sons of the Teutonic knights who had labored so long to either exterminate or convert the Lithuanian nation adopted the principles of the Reformation and became Lutherans. Thus Germany, Latvia, and Estonia became "Evangelical Lutheran."

During the first half of the 16th century, itinerant preachers came to Lithuania with a new religious idealism and sought to arouse interest in the message of the Bible. One must bear in mind that heretofore religion was coming down as rain upon the heads of the people or, in other words, from the nobility to the serf. There were, of course, the pulpits of the various Churches. In Lithuania, however, the priests did not use the spoken language, and the masses of people understood little Polish. Only one thing did the people have and that was the Latin mass and the opportunity for observing the outward manifestations of the Church service. They understood neither the words nor the import of their baptism and merely thought it expedient to bring all children for the blessing. They were confirmed in most peculiar fashion by the lackadaisical clergy and married in the same manner. In short, the Lithuanian peasant had not had time to carefully consider just what it meant to belong to a great Catholic Church. For this reason Protestant preachers who arrived in Lietuva managed to arouse them somewhat, but the serfs had very little to say about a changing over from one form of Christianity to another. The matter was left to the nobles. These Protestant preachers and teachers did do one signal service for Lithuania, however, when they forced the use of the Lithuanian language upon the Polish clergy which had been assigned to stations within the land.

In 1547 A. D., the Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther was translated into the Lithuanian language. It is said to have been translated by a Mazvydas Vaitkunas, a Lithuanian professor in the

university of Koenigsberg. Many other religious works were shortly thereafter translated into the Lithuanian language. Since this was the medium of expression used on the farms and in the streets of the cities, one can imagine the consternation that broke out in the ranks of the nobility. A learned theologian by the name of Kulvietis established, with the aid of Princess Bona Sforza, a Lithuanian College in the city of Vilnius. When this professor of theology accepted the new vigorous Lutheran teachings, he moved the school to Koenigsberg where he continued his efforts to inculcate the faith into the minds of his people.

The great Lithuanian Protestant Prince was Radvila (sometimes spelled Radvill). I rather think that he was more fervently patriotic than religious, but he did strive desperately to arouse his beloved people against the perils of the Polish stagnation. Had they listened to his call and answered by rising up as true Lithuanians, the course of subsequent history might not have become so tragic.

Prince M. Radvila invited the Reformers to come to Lithuania and awaken the people. They came with their books and sought to educate the peasants, but at best the work went slowly forward. Schools were established at Vilnius and Birzai. The Prince established a printing house at Nesvies in 1558, to care for the needs of his country. He himself sought to interest the Lithuanian nobility in rising from their lethargy and asserting themselves; but it was all to no avail. Derisively called the Black Prince by his adversaries, he was also discredited by his contemporary nobles who, being more Polish than Lithuanian, saw only hardships and new campaigns if any change was to be brought about.

Let us take a look at the castle of the Black Prince. (It became an honor to bear this title even as in England). The masonry of this fortress was of tremendous proportions and its situation upon a high promontory completely surrounded by deep water made it impregnable until the coming of the Swedes; their cannon quite effectively reduced the place in short order. Unfortunately, only the ruins remain today, but it is a point of great tourist interest. The government appropriated some money for the work of restoration; but this work will have to await the second restoration of Lithuania.

Prince Radvila was a man of vision. He saw only too clearly that the Lithuanian knighthood was selling its birthright for a mess of Polish pottage. His intuitive nature and keen reason sensed relief in the Reformation movement. To him it promised the restoration of his beloved Lithuania. He was willing to give his all that his country should not perish.

The vigorous Reformation conquered the Teutonic knights and their sons, who became Baltic Barons and present day East Prussians. It spread into the land of the Lithuanian cousins, the Letts, and extended into Estonia and Finland. The Scandinavian countries became Lutheran, and Prince Radvila sensed the growing importance of the Swedish State.

Ivan the Terrible was never in any mood to encourage itinerant preachers of Reform to enter his Empire and consequently Russia remained sternly Orthodox. There was some contact between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic faiths in the no man's land that became known as Central Lithuania. This strip extended from Lithuania Proper into the basin of the Dnieper river. Here East met West and never made a satisfactory bargain, with the result that even to this day, the common people will answer census takers with riddles. To the question: "What is your nationality?" they answer, "Orthodox," and to the question, "What is your religion?" they will most likely answer, "Polak or Catholic." Further inquiry as to religion or nationality may elicit this response, "Tuteishi" — "from here." Only the Jew seems to have kept a consistent regard for his high religious concepts and, for this, he deserves special commendation.

Prince Radvila sought earnestly for a true understanding of the Reformation. He listened closely to the messages that were brought to Lithuania. The movement (Calvinism rather than Lutheranism) spread into the far reaches of the land, but the people were not prepared to receive it. The peasant became more confused than ever. He readily accepted the new rites but knew not the reason why. His allegiance to the new teachings was given as it had been given to the Catholic Church, i. e. with pagan reservations. However, it was enough that Lietuva had bestirred herself, for the Counter Reformation set in with a vengeance and Lithuania was again made into a bastion of the Roman Catholic Church. The Jesuit Order soon established itself at Vilnius to take command of the situation. There appeared a

highly important document known as the Postilla of the Lithuanian Prelate Dauksa (1600 A. D.). The Catholics put on their battle girdles and first cleaned their own house. It was decided that the Lithuanian language should be employed as far as possible in the Churches of Lithuania. Lithuanian sons were to be encouraged to enter the ministry. Laxity of practice amongst the clergy was no longer to be tolerated. The nobility would be kept in line and then the serfs would receive such attention as was necessary. It was a war of faith. The Union between Poland and Lithuania made possible the successful prosecution of the Counter Reformation within the Lithuanian borders, and the country remained on the list of the faithful. Two names of special note in this great work of the Church are Nuncio Commendone and Cardinal Hosius. One factor contributed to the Catholic victory. The Reformation spirit was that of Calvin, and his teachings were employed in such a manner that numerous sects had multiplied into confusion within Lithuania. It appears that no serious Lutheran attempt was ever made beyond the giving of Luther's Catechism and various writings.

We can observe some marks of the Reformation still existing in Lithuania to this day. Churches were built at various places and the Lithuanian people remained tolerant of the new form of Christianity. A large Church had been established at Kedainiai in 1629 by a Radvila, and from this place issued a proclamation of Lithuanian liberty in 1655 A. D. However, an alliance with Sweden was not acceptable to the Lithuanians of the time and nothing came of it. Two Lithuanian leaders who favored such a course were Janush and Boguslav Radvila. The presence of Swedish armies upon Lithuanian soil during the 17th century did not serve any other purpose than to antagonize the Lithuanian and Polish people who were severely beaten by the superior Swedish forces. The greatest good that resulted from the Reformation movement was the new emphasis upon Lithuanian culture. The language was carefully studied for a time, and the clergy let the nobility respect it as something other than a peasant tongue. A new vigor crept into Lithuanian writings. The influence termed Polonization which meant a superficial regard for things of real and lasting value, a false affectation of superior manners, and a cultivated pride that was as degrading as it was exasperating, was for a time set aside. But alas, it was for too short a period.

When victory was certain for the Polish elements within Lithuania, they threw off the mask and returned to their former ways. Lithuania gradually slipped back into a state of mental paralysis and prepared itself for the long wake. The Reformation had given it but a brief breathing spell. Forgotten were the missionaries of 1530 A. D., who had come with such great hopes. Forgotten was Tortylłowicz, the Parish priest of Kaunas who had been converted to the new religion. Forgotten was Abraham Kulvietis, member of the Lithuanian nobility, who found new strength in the Reformation movement and sought to influence others about him.

Mr. Harrison writes in an interesting manner concerning this period in his "Lithuania, Past and Present." He points out that the evidence seems to indicate that the Polish priests had abandoned the traditions of the Church and set their homes to the order of riotous living with continuous rounds of drink and pleasure. Four dioceses were to be found in the Lithuania of the 16th century: Kaunas, Vilnius, Kiev, and Luck.

Harrison maintains that the priest and Bishop made a display of politics and bent every effort to influence legislation in such a manner that their own pockets were filled. Salaries were not proportionate to their worth, and for examples, he mentions the Bishop of Kaunas receiving 5000 florins of gold and the Bishop of Vilnius receiving 40,000 florins of gold. He adds: "Many of the priests had passed through the orders with only the most perfunctory preparations. They were not fitted to direct any sort of undertaking, least of all a Church. At this period, certain Jewish merchants received high appointive positions within the Church structure. The Lithuanian nobility and clergy were very often accused of suffering from the noble ailment (venereal disease)".

The Lithuanian peasant patiently carried on and waited for the final working out of justice. Many large and fine churches were built during this period which became the heritage of the country. Many of these churches can be seen today. It is a delightful experience to drive into the country to observe at numerous points the Gothic and Baroque churches that quite obviously were built during this early period or shortly thereafter. They generally occupy high vantage points from which one can observe a great expanse of country.

At a point near Kaunas which has been named Pazaislis, we find a Convent which was built as a monastery in this post Reformation period. It is rumored that a Count Pac, who had too many sins plus a guilty conscience, decided to make the magnanimous presentation of the Monastery. Artists were imported from Italy to decorate the interior and surely, at one time, it was one of the showplaces of Lithuania. A fine garden surrounds the high towered buildings which are a combination of the Gothic and Baroque styles. The main church under the large dome shows the signs of brutal confiscation and reminds us of the visit of Napoleon in 1813 and the First World War. Treasures were stripped from the place. The vandals of the World War I took even the mosaic floor and the copper roof. In the period of restored independence, the St. Casimir's Sisters (an American Lithuanian Order) maintained it as a Convent. Originally a monastery of the Roman Church, it had been used by a Russian Orthodox Catholic order of monks who had taken vows of perpetual silence and lived in small houses behind the main building. A secret exit led downstairs from the main corridor to a secluded spot by the river Nemunas.

The year 1548 A. D. found the Poles again choosing a Lithuanian Grand Duke to serve as their King. In 1551, King Sigismund Augustus sought to make a reality out of the existing nebulous union. In 1563, however, the Diet held at Warsaw brought forth a good deal of serious discussion concerning the proposals of union, and the Lithuanian delegates were far from convinced. One champion emerges at this meeting in the person of Prince M. Radvila, referred to in the discussion of Reformation problems. This Lithuanian Prince was not dazzled by Polish "splendor." He saw through the clever machinations of the chauvinistic Pole, and warned against the surrendering of hereditary rights by the signing of a Pact. He died in 1565 and with him, it seems, died the hopes of free Lietuva.

The year 1569 A. D. will always occupy a very important place in Lithuanian history, for it marks the final step of the national defection. By the terms of this Lublin union, Lithuania was to accept the Union theory in actuality. She was required to lay aside her right to elect Lithuanian nobility to the office of Grand Duke. Lithuania would be referred to as a Grand Duchy but as such was to be a minor partner with Poland. One can

admire the patient and patent Polish diplomacy of this day and age. They outwitted the Lithuanian delegation who found an outlet only in throwing themselves prostrate before the King and begging for mercy. King Sigismund Augustus was adamant, for he had sworn to surrender his country to Poland.

After 1569 the decline of Lithuania followed a much more rapid course. It was accelerated by the Polonization within Lithuanian noble ranks and the apathy of the illiterate populace. The peasant had no voice and apparently was content with come what may. King Sigismund Augustus died in 1572 A.D. with the full knowledge that he had betrayed his people. True it is that the title persisted for many years, and even in 1623, we read the inscription on coins: "Dei Gratia, Rex Poloniae, Magnus Dux Lituanie." Of no great significance are the two Lithuanian measures: the one in 1586 which denied the right of self rule to the Lithuanian peasantry, and of 1588 which forbade Polish citizens from holding office in Lithuania, although the former illustrates the degree of moral turpitude of the nobility.

While the terrible Inquisition was taking its tremendous toll of life in Spain and elsewhere, Lithuania was gradually sinking into the morass of national unconsciousness. As we have pointed out, the peasant became more bewildered by the turn of events. The Swedes were on the march and the Thirty Years War had proved the strength and military genius of King Gustavus Adolphus. Too often, the tread of these Lutheran legions crossed Lithuanian soil in search of the Catholic foe.

It is perhaps well to remember how people were thinking in this era. Galileo, for example, lived from 1564-1642 A. D. and made some remarkable discoveries. The attitude of the Church in Italy, however, was such that he was condemned for his strange findings. He proposed to demonstrate that the weight did not determine the falling speed of objects and suggested that all materials fall with constant speed in a vacuum. He further discovered the telescope and suggested that the world revolved about the sun. This, indeed, was too much and he was ordered to recant and restore man to his rightful place as the center of all creation. Tradition has it that he recanted but muttered under his breath, "nevertheless it moves." Progress could not be stayed by edict or persecution and the world marched on.

Poor Lithuania humbly waited for the year 1795 when she would be cut down with Poland. Very little need be said of the years 1600-1650 A.D. The nobles found some excitement in battling with the Russians. The nominal rule of Lithuania still extended over western Russia. It was becoming, in reality, Polish rule over the territory. The Polish King sought, as pretender, to hold the throne as Tsar of all Russia in 1610, but it didn't work. In 1617, the Swedes had pushed to Novgorod and dominated the entire Baltic Region.

King Adolphus had said in a speech delivered before the Swedish Estates General early in the 17th century: "Now cannot this foe (Russia) launch but a boat on the East Sea (Baltic) without our permission. The great lakes of Ladoga and Peipus, the river of Narva, thirty miles of wide morasses and strong fortresses part him from us. Russia is excluded from the Baltic and I hope to God it will henceforth be hard for the Russians to leap over the Brook." Little did he know that within a short while, the Russians would be pounding at the very Baltic Sea which they regarded as their natural outlet to western seas.*

Before we leave this disastrous period of Lithuanian history, let us remember that she had retained her own treasury, her laws, her courts, and army even after signing the Union Pact at Lublin in 1569. When King Sigismund Augustus, last of the Lithuanian dynasty in Poland, died, the Lithuanians sought to secure a separate ruler in the person of Henry de Valois of Paris. They also asked the restoration of their former palatinates of Podolia, Volhynia, and a portion of the Kiev territory. It should also be borne in mind that not one decade of this era can rightly be termed tranquil since the Lithuanians and Poles were ever at odds. Two races so entirely different in temperament, culture, and customs could not hope for a successful union.

* In 1613 A. D. the Romanovs came to the Russian throne and gave it new vitality and direction. By 1667, the Russians had driven to Smolensk, Kiev, the Ukraine and threatened the city of Narva in the north. The year 1686 should be remembered as the year for the Lithuanian-Russian "Permanent Pact" which actually lasted for a few years. In 1650, a Swedish cloth maker had introduced the art to Russia. His name was Johann of Sweden.

CHAPTER SIX.

THE DIVIDED STATE LITHUANIA-POLAND (1655-1795 A. D.)

It is most difficult to say when the union between these dissimilar countries of Lithuania and Poland actually became effective. Perhaps it is better to regard the moment of low resistance as being that time when some cooperation was achieved. Surely it is true that the Lithuanian never trusted the Slavic Pole,* and the Pole always regarded himself as definitely above the Lithuanian level. Cartographers purposely omitted the name Lietuva (Lithuania) from maps, and writers will refer to the fall of Poland as if Lithuania had ceased to exist.

In the person of Prince Janush Radvila, the Lithuanians had a champion, but alas, they didn't have enough will power left to consider his clarion call to free action. It was in the year 1655, that Prince Radvila made his eloquent plea for united Lithuanian action in resisting further encroachment of the Polish nobility and clergy. Attention has been called to the latter class because they so intimately connected nationality with religion and were always consistently chauvinistic for Poland. The disturbing and stimulating effects of the Reformation had been rubbed aside.

Prince Janush Radvila had accepted the tenets of the Reformed Church. His religious life may have been quite fervent and surely the critics will attest to its thoroughness since he established churches, printing houses, schools and the like. He presents a picture of a first class patriot to the unprejudiced eye. For him, the thought of alliance with Sweden seemed preferable if riddance could be made of Polish paralysis. Had he been able to muster out the Lithuanian knighthood, which seemed to have been enjoying a soporific knockout during this period, the course of Lithuanian history might not have been so tragic.

The Church of Poland had also encountered trouble amongst the Cossacks of the lower Dnieper river in the middle of this seventeenth century. They had sought to proselytize the doughty Cossacks from the eastern to the western rites of the Christian

* Strange reservations appear to have been made by the nobles in signing the Polish agreement. The clause of "non praestanda obedientia" in the Litho-Polish Constitution granted the right of non-obedience and the "Liberum veto" effectively checked cooperation.

Church, with the result that the Cossacks "told off" the Poles and joined the forces of the Russian Tsar. It was a severe blow to Lithuanian-Polish prestige and hastened the crumbling of the so called Central Lithuania section which had come largely under Polish direction.

Certainly the marching of the Swedish Legions throughout the country weakened the Union now under consideration. Under Gustavus Adolphus and under the other mighty Swedish Conquerors, the fighters from the north blasted all opposition in their determined effort to bring order to northern and eastern Europe. In 1655 A. D., Charles X paid a devastating visit to the city of Kaunas. He could hardly have landed in force at the Lithuanian harbor of Sventoji since his predecessor had filled that sanded harbor with rocks in the year 1625.

Records of the city of Kaunas show that the Russians arrived in the year 1660 A. D. for their unwelcome visit. The ravagers from the land of Muscovy managed to demolish the city after a thorough looting. It is said that Tsar Alexis led the Russian forces on this campaign. To the Russian, there must have been a great deal of comfort in the thought that the Poles had brought about the softening of the Lithuanians so that their turn could at long last come.

Briefly we might say that the Swedes and Russians were the great powers of this day and age. They moved their great forces almost unopposed by lesser antagonists. The Lithuanian legions had degenerated to the Polish level and were not to be classed as worthy enemies, but rather as people over which the strong might pass to meet opposition. We are nearing the day when Germany (Prussia), Austria and Russia would decide upon a formula for division. The years of this division are 1772, 1793 and 1795 A. D.

Another ominous development in the Lithuanian-Polish State was the treatment accorded the remarkable Lithuanian Code of laws. The second edition was made in 1566, with minor changes wrought to bring it up to date. In 1588, we have this interesting consideration: the third edition was made into the Polish language while retaining the title Lithuanian Statute.

In the year 1680, Charles XI of Sweden had vanquished the Danes and advanced into the barren reaches of Russia. Though Lithuania and Poland are close to the battle grounds

of the Swedes and Russians, and though they often played the unwilling host to these forces, there appears to have been no serious attempt on the part of the Swedes to include them in their realm. Perhaps it was the difference of religions that kept this region separate and apart. It was as if the strange State of Lithuania-Poland was destined to sit by the sidelines and watch the Swedes waste their energy in a vain endeavor to smash the rising tide of Muscovy.

We might summarize the waning voice of Lithuanian opposition by a partial listing of Diets that had significant bearing upon the course of events:

- 1401 A. D.—Lithuanian-Polish accord at Vilnius. They would live in peace since cousin Vytautas forgave Jogaila.
- 1413 A.D.—The treaty is renewed at the city of Horodle.
- 1432 A.D.—The Poles ask for Lithuanian assurance that their peace treaty still stands.
- 1499 A.D.—The accord between the two nations is renewed and brought up to date.
- 1501 A.D.—The Lithuanian nobility agrees to make serfs of the peasants.
- 1563 A.D.—Lithuanian nobility meets in solemn session of the Diet in Vilnius.
- 1586 A.D.—Lithuanian nobility still reigns supreme in deteriorating circumstances.
- 1655 A.D.—Prince J. Radvila pleads for Lithuanian independence and suggests union with Sweden.
- 1700 A.D.—Prince Karol Radvila makes plea for Lithuania to arise.
- 1772 A.D.—Lithuania refuses to have anything to do with Russia.

In the year 1700 A. D., Peter the Great of Russia waited for the Swedes to advance against his positions. In the battle of Narva, it came to light that Peter knew very little of the art of war and that Charles XII was a military genius. Incidentally, the city of Narva offered, at least until a very recent date, a study in military contrast set with stone. The tremendous Danish and Swedish fortress with the tall tower stands majestically on the west side of the fast flowing Narva river. Directly opposite, and

not too far removed for intimate glowering, stands the squat Russian fortress built by the Tsars. In this same year of 1700 A. D., when the Swedish might was admired throughout all of Europe, the Lithuanians were again considering their bad estate. A terrible indictment signed by "Karol Radvila, M. Oginskis and A. Oginskis," all with the title of Prince, was considered by the assembled host of Polonized Lithuanian nobles. The lethargy was too thick for any indictment to stir, and nothing came of the patriotic appeal. It is mentioned in this account to show that the voice of the dissenter is still there even though feeble.

Lithuania sat rather dejectedly with her strange ally Poland on the side lines of the great nations to watch the developments. They were aware that the showdown was coming between the Swedes and the Russians. They were powerless to affect the outcome and had little desire other than to remain passive and neutral for as long as possible.

Charles XII led his legions into Russia. He had been advised that the Cossacks would join forces with him to overthrow the monarch in Moscow. He won battles but haughtily refused to treat with a thoroughly terrified Peter the Great, though the latter offered to withdraw from the Baltic if allowed just one port (presumably St. Petersburg). The Cossacks joined the Russians against the Swedes and at Poltava, Charles XII met defeat. It is recorded that following this strange battle, Peter invited his Swedish enemies to an elaborate banquet where he offered the following toast: "To my masters in the art of war."

Peter the Great (1682-1725 A. D.), the rough and ready monarch of all Russia who left Moscow to look westward, had at last set aside the Swedish threat. He had caused to be shaved from Russian faces the beards that set them apart as Orientals. He had brought a change to their way of life. He had diligently forced them to build navies at the north and south of his Empire. He was ready to extend his rule over more Baltic area. He consolidated the Russian hold on that portion of the great Lithuanian Empire of 1430 A.D. which already had come under his control.

In the year 1710 A. D., Peter had virtually incorporated Estonia and half of Latvia into his domain.* The influence of the Baltic

* Russian forces captured Riga in 1710 A. D. Sweden ceded Estonia and Latvia to Russia in the Peace of Nystadt in 1721 A. D.

Barons was considerable in these countries and Peter dealt quite directly with them. Some 170 ruling families were recognized as having authority. The cultural tone of Latvia and Estonia was more nearly that of Sweden and Germany, with Lutheranism the accepted form of Christianity. Lithuania and Poland remained in the fold of the Roman Catholic Church.

It is interesting to note that at Vilnius in the Church of St. John, the Jesuit monks maintained preachers who used the Lithuanian language. The date for this notice is 1737 A. D. H. Karpinskis notes, in his "Lexycon Geograficzny," published at Vilnius in 1766 (page 602): "Vilnius is a city of 60,000 people, most of whom are Lithuanians and Germans." He further notes that the religions are: Catholic, Lutheran, Orthodox, Calvinist, Jewish, and Tartar Moslem.

During this period, 1655-1795 A.D., there was a continual merging of the Lithuanian people with the Germans in the west.* The territory immediately adjacent to the river Nemunas on the west, where we find such cities as Tilsit and Gumbinnen, saw the formation of what can be best termed the Lithuanian German. Lithuanian Protestants and emigrants, together with those indigenous elements of Lithuanian origin, merged with the German settlers to form the East Prussian people. Since they were largely of the Lutheran faith, they became set apart from the Lithuanians in Lithuania Proper. It was an accidental separation rather than one of choice. It illustrates the weakness of the Lithuanian-Polish State which emphasized religion to the point of dissension within.

A Lithuanian Educational Commission was founded in the year 1773 A. D. This organization sought to encourage the Lithuanian children in the matter of school attendance. Appeals to the State Councils failed to bring about immediate action and the Church vacillated on questions involving Polish restraint of Lithuanian nationalism. However, their insistent demands eventually were partially met and the condition somewhat alleviated. The high degree of illiteracy was not regarded as undesirable. Serfdom still held many in its clutches and the nobles still played at games of ease. The goose was ripe for the plucking.

* The great German immigration into Russia Black soil country near the Black Sea was from 1764-1776 A. D. In 1877, there were 80,000 such families. In 1905 A. D., there were 180,000 families.

Prussia, Russia, and Austria looked quite hungrily at the foolish goose. They observed the working out of the "liberum veto" which brought about such inaction. They saw the elements of discord within a nation that was divided against itself. Delegates of the Big Three met in secret sessions to discuss the best procedure. It was decided to bring about some sort of voluntary division.

On May 3, 1791, a Lithuanian-Polish constitution made its appearance, which further serves to illustrate the true condition of affairs. Even the nobility, such as it was, seemingly had lost interest in life. They were entirely lacking in any nationalistic sense and set themselves to an open course of inaction.

A peculiar Diet was held at Warsaw in the year 1772. Two chairmen apparently sought to direct the course of the deliberations. One of the chairmen was the Lithuanian, Thaddeus Reytan, who took exception to the treaty proposals. It is related that he threw himself upon the floor when all arguments seemed vain and that the Polish majority withdrew to another room to ratify all proposals without interruption.

Mr. Hertmanawicz, in a pamphlet printed in September 1920 at Chicago, entitled "The Lithuanians," refers to various misconceptions allegedly held by the United States Secretary of State. Evidently the implication is that the Secretary of State was informed by certain career diplomats that Lithuania had entered into a voluntary agreement to inclusion in the Russian Empire as early as 1772 A. D. However, it would be more reasonable to conclude that our State Department has never been suffering under the delusion that a nation would enter voluntarily into any union with the Oriental Bear.

There was something insidious about the three partitions of 1772, 1793, and 1795. Prussia, Austria, and Russia moved cautiously to partition the inert mass that was then called Poland. In reality, it was the corpse of the former State of Lithuania-Poland with the soul of Lithuania quiescent. Forgotten by the world at the request of the Pole, the greatness of the nation was concealed in the ranks of those humble farmer folk who stayed courageously on their beloved soil from which they refused to be uprooted. We shall see that the ensuing period of servitude under the Russian lash proved a blessing in disguise.

Kas bus, kas nebus, o Lietuvis neprazus.

CHAPTER SEVEN.

THE FIRST INVASION BY RUSSIA. (1772, 1793 AND 1795 A. D.)

Three nations or three religious groups engaged in the infamous division of the weak and incapable Lithuanian-Polish State. Catholic Austria, Orthodox Russia, and Lutheran Prussia connived together to perpetrate a deed that was to have a salutary effect upon Lithuania while leaving Poland comparatively untouched. One fourth of the vast region was sliced in the year 1772 much in the manner of an undeclared war. In the year 1793, a further slice of the territory was made. In 1795, the final readjustment was made. Lithuania, a non-Slavic people, had been added to the largest Slavic power.

It is perhaps correct to say that the ordinary serf didn't notice a great deal of change. The Russians allowed many of the Polish and Polonized Lithuanian landlords to stay on their estates. There was merely a change in administration. Russian soldiers were in evidence at Vilnius and Kaunas. Tax collectors made themselves obnoxious with their insistent search for plunder. Withal, the Russians were determined that the life of the newly added territory, soon to be termed Northwest Territory, should go on without interruption.

The Lithuanians took immediate advantage of the seeming laxity and asked for permission to establish a University at Vilnius. Disregarding the sneers of the Polish and Lithuanian nobility, they set about the task of establishing a center wherein could be studied all that was finest and best of Lithuanian culture. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the University of Vilnius took shape in spite of all difficulties, and here the Lithuanians diligently set themselves to the task of gathering, studying and composing. The University maintained itself for over thirty years, until the Russians intensified their Russification program. While this persecution lasted, the restoration work remained quiescent.

During this period of Russian enslavement, there were violent outbursts against the rule of the Russian. In the year 1812, some patriotic people rebelled, but nothing good came of it. In 1831, there were repetitions of this revolt. In the year 1863, a more violent rebellion was staged. This last mentioned revolt against

tyranny and oppression was brutally put down by Governor Muraviev, "the Hangman." There were moments when the spirit of revolt burned rather brightly, but relief did not come until the Great World War of 1914. The revolt of 1904-1905, brought slight amelioration for the development of the Lithuanian national culture.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Europe was treated to a series of blitzkrieging campaigns by a certain Corsican upstart. This same man was impatient at his own crowning; history records that he seized the crown and placed it upon his own head. In July, 1807, this self crowned Emperor of France, Napoleon, conqueror of many monarchs of decadent Italy, Spain, Germany, and Austria met the Tsar of all Russias on a special barge anchored in the Nemunas river by the city of Tilsit. Just why they should meet on the exact borderline is not mentioned, but apparently both were correct in the assumption that the other should not be trusted. They drew up a Pact that made no allowance for Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, or Poland. Disregarding this snub, there was announced in 1809, a Duchy of Warsaw. Napoleon's foreign policy at this period of history is something awesome to behold, and many a political student will gaze long and diligently at passages depicting the technique of diplomats and statesmen such as Metternich.

The treaty of Tilsit did not last very long, for Napoleon was impatient. He decided upon a campaign into the barbarian reaches of Moscow, though fully aware that marks of civilization were few and far between. The Russians were quite prepared for him because they were masters of destruction and knew full well the technique of retreat. (They had diligently practiced this as the Lithuanians and Swedes chased them hither and yon over the vast stretches.) They burned villages and crops as they withdrew.

Obviously the little French conqueror didn't understand the mentality of these Russians. He didn't realize that this enemy was fatalistic to the extreme and had no fear of death. He didn't see the lurking stare of the maniacal killer behind the deceptive gaze of clear blue eyes. He didn't know that this Russian killer had been molded in a crucible of hellish terror. Nor did the many Lithuanians, Poles, Germans, and other freebooters who had joined his ranks realize that they would be fighting cruel sadists

allied with a cold winter that would bring hunger and starvation in its wake.

The Lithuanians can be forgiven for having been thrilled at the thought of being delivered from the grip of Russia. Hundreds of volunteers made their way towards the border to welcome the conqueror from the west. Napoleon most likely was elated as he viewed the enthusiastic crowds that greeted him everywhere throughout Poland and Lithuania. It was a beautiful day in July, 1812 A. D. when Napoleon himself drew close to the bank of the Nemunas river. His soldiers had erected a reviewing tower from whence he could see the Russians ride wildly along the other bank taunting him. These were, of course, the hard riding Cossacks. Napoleon did not linger long. He set up pontoon bridges across the fast flowing Nemunas, after a Polish detachment had demonstrated that it was unsafe for swimming. The city of Kaunas received him gladly and a fine ball was held in his honor. Napoleon chose the buildings wherein he would keep his army and their mounts. The Catholic Church of Vytautas and the Lutheran Church by the river's side were used to stable the horses. Napoleon himself slept nearby. His soldiers deported themselves with decorum. They were part of the Grande Armée. They were conquerors. They were on their way to Moscow.

Napoleon was anxious to be on his way. He was a strategist who considered the weather, the great distances involved, and the temper of his foe. He misjudged everything but the distance. His way to Moscow led through Vilnius, Smolensk, Vyazma and Borodino. It was difficult to contact the enemy. The army of Napoleon won every pitched battle, but was never quite able to trap the wily foe in this vast stretch of wilderness. It became more and more difficult to forage for the army since food was scarce at best and the Russian destroyers were active.

The Lithuanians meanwhile had proclaimed the restoration of their Grand Duchy, with Vilnius their capital city. No one seemed to know exactly what this move did mean, for the Lithuanian guarantee rested with the monarch who even then was struggling against the forces of nature and the strange assortment called Russia. Since the Russian had withdrawn from Lithuania, literally by expulsion, it was not difficult for the Lithuanians to get along under their hastily arranged system of home rule. It was not to be thus for very long.

Napoleon met his master in large scale maneuvering over the difficult terrain of Russia. After reaching Moscow, Napoleon was forced to stand by and observe the city burn. He made the fateful decision of delaying a retreat in the face of winter. This retreat has been often referred to in poetry and prose. Suffering, struggling soldiers wearily plodded along until death graciously removed them. Cossacks and Russians fell upon many small detachments in the long series of rear guard actions. Napoleon could not make contact with his supporting army and he was forced to flee the scene of the rout. A small stone monument stands by the city of Vilnius with this simple inscription on the one side, "Napoleon passed this way in the year 1812 with 400,000 men," while on the other side with the arrow pointing westward, "Napoleon passed this way in the year 1813 with 40,000 men." Thus is the story graphically told. With Napoleon's defeat, disaster overtook the Lithuanians once again.*

Through Vilnius and Kaunas came remnants of Napoleon's Grande Armée, now reduced to the level of disorganized rabble. They plundered and looted wherever they tarried. Many fine Church treasures were taken from Lithuania to be carried to France. It is said of Napoleon that he traveled from Kaunas to Paris (approximately 1400 miles) in something less than 300 hours. In this wild and hasty flight, he utilized every known means of conveyance. Tsar Alexander of Russia had lost the battles and won the war.

In the year 1815 A. D., a certain Congress was held at Vienna in which the greatest statesmen and diplomats of the century participated. Their deliberations were not very brilliant but their terminology was astounding. The Hon. Thomas Masaryk, former President of Czechoslovakia, wrote in his "Spirit of Russia" concerning this conference: "The monarchs (of Prussia, Russia and Austria) consider themselves to be no more than plenipotentiaries of Divine Providence, privileged to rule three branches of the same family, and they recognized no other sovereign than God, Christ and the Living Word of the Almighty." This statement was duly signed by the self adoring monarchs on September 26, 1815.

* Other estimates are as follows, 750,000 soldiers marched towards Moscow while approximately 80,000 men managed to escape from the various sectors. Russian peasants aided the soldiers in mutilating and killing the wounded and maimed.

Meanwhile Lithuania lay imprisoned. The Cossacks had moved directly into Vilnius and Kaunas. They had despatched their roving patrols to discipline hastily the erstwhile hopeful Lithuanian peasants. The country was introduced to more strenuous regulations and exactions. All who had in any way cooperated with Napoleon were, of course, liquidated in the approved barbarian manner. Poor Alexander just couldn't understand why any of his subjected prisoners should wish for freedom. He heard of a plot hatched at Kiev in 1823 that was timed for his assassination in the Ukraine in 1824. He muttered: "Ah, the monsters, I had so definitely planned only for their happiness." He died at Taganrog on December 1, 1825 A. D.

Look closely at Russia which showed a startling growth. At the close of Peter's reign, she had a population of 13,000,000. On the passing of Catherine, that figure had risen to 36,000,000. By 1800 A. D. it stood at 43,000,000 of which 5,000,000 were on the other side of the Ural mountains. This total, of course, included the Baltic regions and territory taken in the expansion moves. Pestel, a Lutheran labor leader, who was quartered with several others after the December revolt in 1825 (Dec. 14), writes that within the Empire of Russia, one finds Great Russian, Little Russian, White Russian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian and, of course, Estonian, Finn, Lithuanian, Latvian, and Pole with several other minority groups.

The year 1863 found the Lithuanians engaging in still another revolution against the Oriental barbarism of Russia. They again brought the dreaded Cossacks into play with the willful subjects. Cruelty that can hardly be adequately described in words was indulged in by these sadists, and the following year brought as Governor in Vilnius, that noble Russian who earned the nickname "The Hangman." His name was Muraviev, which name was used, in due time, by mothers who wished to frighten their children into obedience.

Governor Muraviev boasted that he would completely stamp out insurrection and erase the name Lithuania from the map. How little he knew of these people and how completely erroneous was his judgment. From 1864 until 1904, the policies of Muraviev were directed against Church, culture, and life without any result other than solidifying the now thoroughly aroused Lithuanian patriotism. Various edicts were issued from time to time which were calculated to Russify the nation completely, but to no avail.

From 1800-1832 A. D., Lithuanian students were hard at work. They kept right at it. They studied the folklore, folksongs, literature, and art of Lietuva. They were earnestly devoted to the cause of preserving the marks of Lithuanian traditional culture. Since the nobility within Lithuania seemed so devoid of interest in working for the resuscitation of the country, it fell to the lot of peasants and sons of peasants to prepare themselves for this great task. They arose to the occasion. The movement began slowly but surely from the rank and file of Lithuanian peasants who had never lost faith in their country. They watched the Russian overlords very carefully. They understood the portent of each measure undertaken against them and they resisted with their full might. Their precious language was never forgotten, for mother and father passed it on to son and daughter. The Lithuanian school was held by the spinning wheel and in the field. Every Russian move calculated to intensify the Russification was met by persistent resistance. Lithuania grew strong under the Russian rule.*

By 1845 A. D., the Russians had closed the Church of Vytautas. The closing of Churches also helped solidify the resistance of the Lithuanians, and for the first time in their history, they took a real interest in their Catholic religion. It became confused with nationality and this misconception persisted until 1940 in many quarters.

The Russians utterly failed and the Lithuanians actually pitied their cruel taxmasters who forgot all rules of humanity and decency in order to prove their false premise that a culture far older than their own, and greater in every way, could be erased from the face of the earth. Actually, the Lithuanians conquered the Russians as we shall see.

In 1832, the Russians had driven out the Catholic monks and, after rifling the precious endowments of the various monasteries, had turned over the property to the Orthodox Catholic Church. By 1864, the name of Lietuva was carefully removed from Russian maps and the territory was named the "Northwest

* The middle of the 19th century should be remembered as an unfortunate period, for misery came to many lands and peoples. In Ireland, due to serious overpopulation, a great famine settled over the country causing it to become virtually an old people's home. Three years later, Russia intervened in favor of Austria against the Hungarians much to her discredit and sorrow. In 1854 A.D., the Russians were fighting a war in the Crimea because some foolish monks wanted the keys to the Church of Bethlehem. The north and the south of the United States, minus emphasis on the United, would soon be fighting on the American fields for honor as they saw it.

Territory." Kalmucks and Tartars were imported into the country and many Lithuanians introduced to the long, long trail of Siberia or other portions of Russia. One had to be a Russian in order to hold office. The condition of the Catholic Church deteriorated because Polish priests disappeared and Lithuanian priests were not numerous. Seminaries and schools suffered from visits of police who confiscated materials on various charges of seditious activity.

By 1864, the Lithuanian schools were closed and Russian training became compulsory. It was illegal to print in the Lithuanian language. Legal action was difficult for there existed three codes, namely the Napoleonic, the Russian, and the Lithuanian code which, though abolished in 1842 by decree, persisted in rural sections. It must have been sad, indeed, to be tried before a judge who understood no other language than the Russian. But the Lithuanian language did not die. The mother taught her daughter and the father conversed with his son. The peasant proved the master of the Russian, for he devised many ways to circumvent the difficulties. Interesting tales are told of book runners who smuggled Lithuanian literature during these days. Secret police methods of the Russians were studied and effective means found to combat them successfully—book nooks of the secretive variety could be found in almost every home. It is said that prayer books for the forbidden Lithuanian Catholic service were printed in Russian script, which proved deceitful for a long time since the Russian guards couldn't read. Due to the intense effort of the Russian and the stubborn Lithuanian resistance, many thousands of Lithuanian patriots lost their lives. By 1894, no Lithuanian held office.

The Russians had created new estates and supplied harsh masters. Though the serf had been raised by decree of the Tsar in 1861 to the status of peasant with the right to hold land, his lot was no better than it had been with the Pole. However, the Lithuanian possessed that resiliency of spirit which never broke. It always endured patiently—and waited the day of deliverance. This was not far off.

A Trip to Siberia in the year 1865.

Let me briefly recount what might have happened in the year 1865 A. D. to those who were apprehended while carrying the forbidden books. By forbidden books, I mean those specifically banned by the various Russian laws and considered seditious be-

cause they dealt with Lithuanian subjects or were written in that language. Also banned were the Roman Catholic prayer books, for a very serious attempt was being made to convert the Lithuanian to the Greek Orthodox Catholicism. These volumes were transported from places of origin, such as Germany, to the homes of the eager Lithuanian nationalist. The one thought which encouraged the practice of religion was that by so doing, the Lithuanians were keeping alive their heritage. The runners were recruited from every walk of life; they might be men or boys, mothers or maidens. Since it was an illegal procedure, the greatest caution was exercised. Books were transported under cover of night, requiring a great deal of subterfuge. The smugglers were apt to be stopped and searched by the ever diligent secret police, border guards, or regular police force. No runner was ever entirely safe until he was rid of his illegal burden. Then, too, homes were subject to search, since all Lithuanians were included under the law and could be suspected of encouraging the trade.

Casimir was a youth of twenty in the year 1865. He lived in the town of Jurbarkas and gained his livelihood from fishing in the river Nemunas. At times, the boat carrying Casimir would enter the Sesupe river to the west of Jurbarkas and considerably down stream. From a secret landing place, the boy would make his way overland to a point where he would contact certain parties and receive a precious load of books that were banned by Russian law, but highly desired by the Lithuanian. Casimir would bring this load to his boat, carefully concealing it in the secret locker.

He had made the trip many times and had brought many a precious prayer book to his beloved people. Joined in the enterprise with him were many other runners. The thought of bringing joy and comfort to his beloved people, now suffering under the Russian yoke, spurred him to make a good effort and brought its own compensation. This was a work that offered no mundane reward; rather certain punishment if apprehended.

On this particular trip, Casimir was being watched. He had long been under the suspicion of the Russian secret police. Spies watched his return to the dock at Jurbarkas, and soon the police inspectors were sauntering down to meet him. After a brief exchange of pleasantries that served to torture the anxious youth, they asked for permission to inspect his boat. This was not un-

usual and Casimir had reason to hope that they would again fail to find the cache that held the forbidden books. The search was prolonged on this occasion, but was finally over and to all intents and purposes, Casimir was given a clean bill. He sighed when the police withdrew.

Late in the evening, Casimir returned to his boat and furtively retrieved the precious cargo. He didn't know that spying eyes were watching his every move. Little did he realize that they were seeking to uncover the complete ring of book runners. He hurried into his home and stored away the precious books in secret hiding places. The spies, after reporting that Casimir had brought a large bundle from the boat, had been sent back to keep a strict watch over all who would come and go from the place.

Early the next morning, Casimir's young sister accompanied her brothers to a nearby field where the cows were grazing. While they milked, she seemed to be idly playing near a small stream. Several small objects were soon drifting down this lazy current. A few hundred yards downstream, they were retrieved by waiting women who carefully unfastened the wrapped books from the small blocks of wood and hurried away. Thus it was that the first delivery escaped the watchful eyes of the Russians.

The police were playing a trump card when a priest visited the home, ostensibly on a visit. He professed a great interest in the people of Jurbarkas and explained that it was his first visit to the neighborhood. He enjoyed the Lithuanian hospitality which included a long and elaborate feast with the continuous rounds of krupnikas and vodka. Finally the questions relating to religious life and practice came up. It was during this conversation that the story of the book running was cautiously discussed. He learned that Casimir was to deliver some books to an undisclosed point in the nearby woods that very night.

It was sometime after the priest had departed that a report was made to the local Russian secret police officer. A plan was made immediately to have Casimir trailed, and sufficient officers were called to arrest all the runners who might gather. It worked to perfection and Casimir, together with ten men, women and children were seized by the police and their books confiscated.

The trial was summarily short. All were found guilty of conspiring against the safety of the Russian State and of violating the law. They were sentenced to imprisonment in Siberia.

Casimir was a moody youth who had received only a meager education and who regarded the Russian with an inveterate hatred. He felt that he was being persecuted for performing an act that to him was a holy mission. Why the government of Russia should desire the changing of faith was something that never entered his head. He merely saw the injustice of it all. He felt very keenly the shame of having inadvertently exposed the others by his own part in the transfer. He cried when he thought of the young children who would also be expected to pay the penalty.

The prisoners began their long trek to the concentration camp in Siberia. To recount all the horrors of this long walk would require more space than we can allow. Suffice it to say that of the entire group referred to in our story only Casimir survived, and he survived because, his mind gone, the cruel guards lost interest in torturing him. He finally died in a prison hospital without benefit of clergy.

When one takes this short account and multiplies it many hundreds of times, one has a faint conception of the burden that was borne by a heroic people during the period of Russian occupation.

Further illustrations will serve to give a clearer picture of the life in Eastern Europe during this trying period. The Russians had one thought in mind: the extermination of the active Lithuanian element. Priests were driven from churches and their places were filled by Orthodox priests, who were chauvinistic to a fault. Leaders were either executed on the spot or sentenced to the living death of Siberia. The nobility lived in senseless pursuit of sensual pleasures while the peasants served their purpose. The Russian nobility who came into Lithuania were not of the highest order.

Governor Muraviev was an interesting as well as a terrible character. He lived in the Vilnius palace and ruled arbitrarily enough. He enjoyed seeing his prisoners grovel and ask for mercy which he could never hope to feel. He loathed weakness and loved to find in his prisoners some willingness to endure punishment for the sake of living or dying according to fatalistic rules.

He advocated a strict rule and asked for such decrees that require the minimum amount of grace and gave the least assurance to his subjects. As long as he ruled harshly and had his tax moneys streaming towards Moscow he was in favor with the court there, and it accepted all of his reports without question. He loved to feel that he was on his own and that the subjected nation of Lithuania feared him. The echoes of their terror stirred him to even greater repressive measures. He directly used the church and the Cossack. A favorite trick was to trump up charges against the Roman Church, take it over when the military were through with their pillage and then assign Orthodox priests to win over the hapless congregation. A playful hobby of the mounted Cossack was to dash heroically through villages, seeking to impale on a lance some unfortunate townsman who was unable to get out of the way, or at least to give a good lashing to the several people who would try to escape from their wild course through the city.

On an evening of May, 1864, Governor Muraviev held a dinner party at his mansion. To the dinner were invited the nobility who were eligible and the officers of the Cossack division stationed at Vilnius. It was a grand affair celebrating the birthday of a great lady. Gay lights shone upon many a happy couple. The lords and ladies cared very little for the wants of the poor people who lived in the land. The Governor was especially happy, for he had arranged for his daughter to marry a Polish heir to a fine estate. He had graciously promised to take care of the financial wants of the prospective groom's father with a lucrative appointment. The two young people didn't seem to mind this sideplay, for they believed their union was directed by the heart.

On another occasion, Governor Muraviev was feasting at an inn with officers of the Cossack guard when the desire to hold a Lithuanian serving maid in his arms came upon him. Under the influence of drink, he approached the girl and proposed that she accompany him to a room above. The girl was terrified and looked appealingly towards the innkeeper who callously looked the other way rather than offend the great Russian ruler and thus bring down his wrath upon his place. A village boy, however, noted the import of the scene and intervened on behalf of the girl. For this rash act, he was taken by the guards and imprisoned. Muraviev had his pleasure with the girl and on the next day, sentenced the boy to life imprisonment in Siberia.

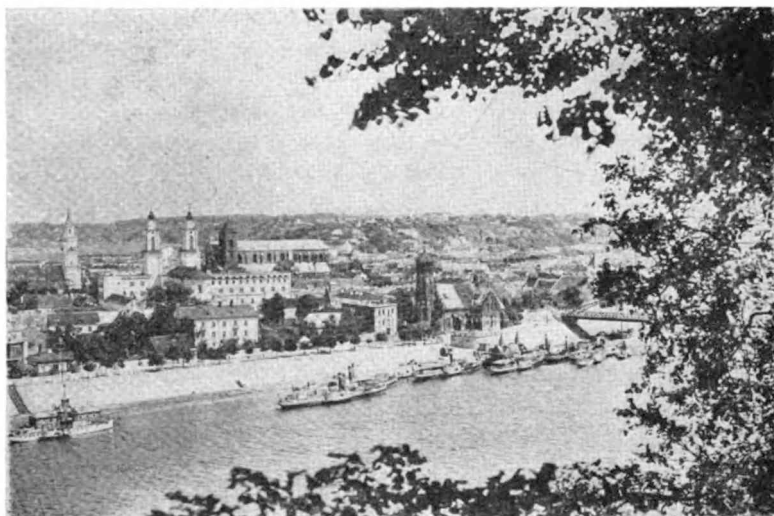
Further illustrating the contemporary life of this period was a banquet held in honor of the "great and respected ruler Muraviev" at the hall of a rich count. It was a glittering display, and the rounds of drinks brought new toasts and new boasts. When they drank a toast to the lovely daughter of Muraviev, the gentlemen gallantly tossed their glasses to the floor lest another toast should mar the glass. One guest forgot himself temporarily and tossed his glass at the large mirror which flanked the room. It broke into many pieces, and immediately a hush settled over the group. Muraviev spoke slowly and coldly to the effect that this offense called for stern rebuke, but in view of the occasion, he would excuse the act if proper compensation were made. The offending lord subsequently paid over 5000 rubles. It was Russian custom and Russian retribution.

Life in 1864 was not greatly changed for the serf who had become a peasant once again. He lived quietly under his thatched roof and spent most of the sunlit hours in the field. During the long summer days, he was obliged to do all manner of work for the lords of the vineyards and farms. He was expected to care for livestock as well as the fields. The Russian system called for long narrow strips of land to be cultivated by the farmer, and this meant a greater amount of work for the net gain. These strips radiated forth from the small cluster of homes in the village nucleus.

He found time to repair his buildings, especially the thatched roof. He mended his meager tools when they demanded attention and he devised strange tools to do a given task better. At best, however, the Lithuanian peasant overcame the lack of equipment with skillful application of strength. When he worked hard at his given assignments and fulfilled the requirements of his estate owner, he enjoyed a comparative freedom and security.

The home life was simple but enjoyable. They indulged in various family pursuits as their means allowed, and enjoyed the companionship of the village nucleus. They were not allowed to roam about the estate, but could go to market whenever it was necessary. Church services were not denied until the Muraviev program against the churches called for a new adjustment to conditions.

The young people growing up in peasant homes sought social contact within their own group at the village nucleus or at



Birdseye view of Kaunas at inflow of Neris river
into Nemunas river.



Vytautas swears vengeance against Teutons



Historical Mounds of Kernava



Cathedral of Vilnius and the Hill of
Gediminas seen at distance

nearby points. A village dance, carnival, or gypsy show was usually well attended. The church also afforded a meeting place for girl and swain, but matches were carefully made. Young people were to marry within their own level and within their own religion.

Fishing was done whenever water was near at hand, in lake and in river. Fish could be caught with net or hook and many of the young people found this occupation highly profitable. If the lake were upon the estate, it was necessary to obtain permission to fish, and a small payment was made for the privilege.

The religious life was at best very simple. Attendance at mass had been taught as an essential duty if one hoped for heavenly grace. The confessional booth heard strange tales of social wrongs. The peasant appreciated the presence of a faithful clergy who ministered at baptisms, confirmations, funerals, and marriages. The tone of the clergy perceptibly improved with the passing of the Polish clergy and the rise of faithful Lithuanian sons of the Church. It improved in adversity.

It might be well to mention in this regard that certain pagan customs still prevailed in Lithuania, up to the end of the 19th century. The visitation of fire, for instance, was regarded with peculiar awe. A farmer was loath to put out a granary fire since he believed it a good omen. The festival of March 1st, when the passing of winter was celebrated by the burial of an old doll, was observed. The feast of July called Vainikynas, which called for the binding of wreaths, was also observed. It was a custom to hang a wreath from the highest part of a house under construction to ward off evil spirits. Some of these customs persist until this very day.

The Russian was unable to draw the attention of the Lithuanian away from his Catholic worship. Many of the outward forms of the Roman Catholic were similar to those of the Orthodox. For instance: the making of shrines corresponded with the ikon veneration of the Russian and consequently it was allowed. The Lithuanian peasant brought forth many varieties of shrines and crucifixes. His innate desire for religious expression was thus satisfied. He sat at his bench and carved statues of the sorrowing Christ and the Virgin Mary. He devised an artistic conception of such scenes as the nativity, the crucifixion, and the

arising from the grave. It was peasant art and showed an originality that was startlingly fresh and strong. The peasant brought to his art some pagan ideas which included the rays of the sun and moon, formerly venerated in the ancient worship. Ofttimes the carvings were decorously painted. The love of strong, bright colors shows itself in the adorning of these statues. Very often they are dressed in fine colored robes and beads. I once saw in a church, a statue of the Virgin Mary adorned with so many beads, gold, and silver that surely she must have been weary carrying the heavy load. (During the Russian occupancy of June, 1940 to June, 1941, most of the Lithuanian churches were systematically looted.) I mention this detail of literally bringing offerings to the temple, to illustrate the inherent generosity of the Lithuanian people. They would go without many of the ordinary comforts of life in order to bring precious offerings to their fine churches.

Such a luxury as a floor in the humble cottage was dispensed with not so much because it couldn't be obtained, but rather because they thought it was not needed. Instead of building chimneys, the peasants often utilized a hole in the roof to carry off the smoke. Obviously, such living conditions were conducive to contracting pulmonary diseases, especially tuberculosis or sinus infections, and aggravated the death rate. It should be noted that during the 19th century, although the Lithuanians and Poles were the most fecund people of Europe, their population figures advanced only slightly. Large families were urged upon them, but comparatively few survived the unequal battle against poverty and unsanitary living conditions.

Culturally Lithuania was at a standstill. She did recall former eras of glory, and the recounting of Dainos and historic tales were performances of major importance. Lithuanians were reliving the past.

The first Lithuanian newspaper to make its appearance was known as "Lietuviška Zeitunga," the Lithuanian Times, which was published in 1872 at Klaipeda (Memel). This paper eventually became known as the Memeler Dampfboot. Student sheets called "The Blacksmith Liar" and others were being published at other places. Patriotic journalists such as Dr. Basanavicius, Dr. Kudirka, Dr. Sliupas, and Mr. Jankus were active in the great work of arousing national sentiment and thus preparing the ground for

eventual Lithuanian restoration of independence. Complete co-operation seems to have been the order of the day and the Russians found it increasingly more difficult to cope with.

Between the years 1900 and 1902, the Russian guards confiscated some 50,000 Lithuanian publications. On April 27, 1904, the Russian government admitted defeat and issued an "ukase" which practically permitted the publication of books and papers in Lithuanian. The Lithuanian patriots were ready and the people happily received all that came their way.

On October 17, 1904, the Tsar issued a decree which granted the Lithuanian civil liberties and allowed for representatives in the Russian Duma. The following year on December 4, a great convention of Lithuanians was held at Vilnius where some 2000 delegates assembled to consider formulating requests for complete autonomy within the structure of the Russian Empire. It was a fitting tribute to Dr. Basanavicius that he was elected President of this assembly.

However, Russia had suffered a severe setback in prestige by her defeat in the Russian-Japanese war of 1905. The Government was loath to make further concessions in the region of the Northwest Territory, and Lithuanian requests went unheeded for some time. The revolt of Latvia and Estonia against Russian rule eventually found an echo in Lithuania. The Peasants Union which had been organized by Mr. J. Gabrys vented their feelings by refusing to pay further taxes, by dismissing certain Russian teachers, and by establishing Lithuanian courts. The disturbances within the three Baltic countries were quelled by the use of force, and again the people settled into a patient wait. They had gained a certain measure of autonomy in respect to education and cultural concessions.

Lithuania was a thoroughly chastened nation. She had known poverty, famine, and war during the Polish defection. Under the Russian rule, she had been beaten, discriminated against, and continually threatened with dire results if she disobeyed the hated edicts. But denationalize she would not. In this, she prevailed against both Pole and Russian with their Slavic ideals. Briefly, in 1812 when Napoleon arrived with his military forces, in 1831, and in 1863 when revolt seemed to promise release, she had envisioned liberty and freedom. She had known the dangers of book smuggling and the delights of secret societies

dedicated to the cause of liberty. She had known the pain of prison and exile, the public whipping post, and hanging. Many of her sons had fled to North or South America in pursuit of that liberty of conscience and freedom of life that was denied in occupied Lithuania.

The Lithuanian interest in education took a notable turn. It was thought better to have a Russian or German education than none at all. Many of the universities in Europe harbored small groups of Lithuanian students. Books began to appear in profusion and the list is said to have numbered over 2,000 before 1914. Art was encouraged and very often followed a theme of religion or of symbolic nationalism. Ciurlionis with his "Prelude" in 1908, and Zmuidzinavicius with his "Vision" in 1913, illustrate the trend in art. An effort was made to bring to recognition the popular peasant art of Lithuania. Agriculture also received the benefit of scientific methods.

CHAPTER EIGHT.

LITHUANIA AND THE WORLD WAR.

The Russian high command had long considered the eventuality of warfare with Germany. Since July 9, 1870, when the Russian Prince Gortchakov had assured the English Ambassador that Russia did not feel alarmed over the rapid rise of the Prussian State, the actions of Russia rather belied this bit of wishful thinking. She had raised relief funds for France and she realized that her greatest vulnerability in respect to Prussia was in Poland and the three Baltic States.

Russia gradually swung into the orbit of Great Britain and France and looked to her western defense zones. It is a matter of record that some \$8,000,000 were spent on the defense of Kaunas alone. Libau in Latvia was made into a strong naval base, and Warsaw came to be regarded as a key position of the new Russian defense system. These are but a few of the points which received the attention of Russia's military men, but serve to illustrate briefly her position prior to the outbreak of the war 1914-1918.

Her greatest weakness lay in her inability to trust the garrisons stationed at any given point. At Kaunas, for instance, one found shells which did not fit the guns of the fortress. Apparently, the Russians feared a revolt much more than an actual invasion by Germany. Rifles of an ancient vintage were stocked at this point. These factors and the inconsistency of the Russian military officers contributed to the weakening of their otherwise immense military might.

An order had been posted in the city of Kaunas that no dwelling should exceed the height of two stories lest the structure interfere with the marksmanship of the Russian gunners. Not many Lithuanians lived within the confines of the town. A large share of the population was made up of Jewish and some German trading people. (Jews were found within Lithuania, Bessarabia, West Ukraine, and Poland since these countries were outside the so called Jewish pale, established by the Russians.)

The 19th century town was literally a cesspool, for open sewers ran down the depressions on either side of the street. The Jewish population was huddled in the section near the confluence of

the Nemunas and Neris rivers. Streets were unpaved, and when the frequent rains fell, the trampling of peasants' horses drawing loads of provender to the marts made the place into a morass. Only the Russian military roads, paved with field stones, provided decent ways of travel. Tourists who braved the vicissitudes of travel in this part of the world reported invariably that Kaunas was certainly a place to be avoided at all costs.

In the lower part of the city, one could find the ancient Cathedral which had been built in the time of Vytautas and the church which still bears his name by the river bank. There were also the church of the Jesuits and the Parish Church which stood close to the Seminary grounds. A few synagogues could also be found. One Lutheran church stood near the point where the bridge spanned the Nemunas river. The Russians had provided an enormous church for the use of the troops and it was known as the Sobor. To my way of thinking, it is the finest church structure in all of Lithuania. The wide street which was eventually called *Laisvės Aleja* (Freedom Avenue) runs from the old town to this church. This broad freedom avenue is flanked by rows of beautiful trees and is, of course, the promenade of Kaunas. At the lower end of this Avenue was found the mansion of the Russian Governor which eventually became the President's Palace.

In 1914, Europe was thrown into the throes of the great World War I. Since Russia had bound itself in an alliance with Britain and France, it made hasty preparations to meet the threat of the war from the very first outbreak in the Balkan region. In fact, Russia precipitated the cataclysm by stubbornly backing Slavic Serbia in the initial trouble with Austria.

The firm stand of Russia behind the little country of Serbia brought Germany to the side of Austria and the whole world to attention. Conscription followed everywhere within Russia and not least in Lithuania. Although many Lithuanians were already in the Russian armies, the usual practice of the Russians to employ nationalities far from their homeland accounts for their serving on fronts other than that formed in Lithuania.

Two large Russian armies advanced in the general direction of Koenigsberg and caused a severe shock to the German high command. The advance in this sector possibly saved the cause

of the Allies in the west who needed a breathing spell to reform their lines of defense. Typical Russian conduct of their invasion attempt through East Prussia enabled Hindenburg and Ludendorff, who utilized the plan of Fritsch, to cut one army in a series of quick maneuvers about the Masurian Lakes and to cause the withdrawal of the other.

In 1915, the Germans made a steady advance against the Russians through Lithuania. They had failed in their previous attempt to force a withdrawal from Warsaw and used their strength in flanking movements. The great fortress of Kaunas did not respond to the shelling of the Germans who employed Big Berthas of a caliber slightly in excess of 16 inches. Two or three of the forts were disabled and shortly thereafter the Germans entered the city. A serious fight ensued in the vicinity of Siauliai, but the Germans quickly succeeded in forcing the Russians back to the city of Riga in Latvia.

Following the initial success of the German drive, the Russians confiscated and carried away all movable machinery. They destroyed all buildings calculated to be of strategic value to the advancing German armies. Fighting rear guard actions was the real repast of the Russian soldiers, but their destructive activities were so thorough that sometime later when the Germans had passed from the trenches, we find the Lithuanian peasants occupying these same trenches in lieu of their destroyed homes. The indomitable urge to live prevailed, and soon they were busy rebuilding their homes and planting new crops. They eventually found the Germans severe taxmasters with full levies made for provisioning and feeding the army of occupation.

Interesting stories of war activities are handed down to this day. The Russians had deliberately chosen a railroad gauge of five feet to hamper any invasion attempt. The Germans, however, merely lined up soldiers who were instructed how to move the rail on one side over a few inches so that the gauge became four feet eight and one half inches or standard gauge.

The occupational force of Germans rapidly brought order to the place. Military curfews were rigidly enforced. Lithuanian peasants were quick to appreciate the stability and security that German rule brought, even though they chafed under the idea of foreign rule.

The currency introduced was called the Ost-mark and this currency was utilized for a time following the re-establishment of Lithuanian independence.

The Germans helped themselves to a great portion of Lithuania's timber wealth. Hungry industries at home called for huge withdrawals, and some of the finest trees in Lithuania were cut down and shipped to Germany. Requisitioning for the army of occupation helped decimate the numbers of Lithuanian livestock which had been hidden away in forest and swamp. The Germans proved rather systematic about their pillaging, however, and usually saw to it that the peasant retained enough horses and cows to get along.

The Germans also brought new ideas of sanitation to Lithuania. Medical supplies from the Vaterland helped to eliminate the dangers of epidemics. During the period of occupation, the Sobor Church was utilized by the Lutheran chaplains. The administration of the occupied territory maintained an attitude of strict neutrality in the matter of religion, and the Catholics enjoyed greater freedom than had been possible under the Russians.

Many Lithuanians lost their lives in the defense of the Russian Lithuania. Many more, however, were still serving with the Russian forces on the line that stretched from Riga to Dvinsk and to Baramovich. The Germans did not make any serious attempt to break this long line until the year 1917 when a general drive led up to the Treaty making at Brest-Litovsk, following the Russian revolution and installation of the Red rule.

During the period of occupation, it is estimated that the Germans requisitioned over 250,000 tons of grain and 1,000,000 head of livestock. The land of Lithuania continued to supply all the wants of the people and of this army which afforded it "protection." The Germans removed all copper, nickel, and other essential war commodities that they could find. The copper roof, for instance, came off the Convent of Pazaislis.

Picture if you can the scenes of desolation and waste within the borders of Lithuania, a country of people who had no chosen share in the struggle between Russia and Germany. Once the Pope in Rome had called the Lithuanians the "Saracens of the North." No nation had dared approach within shouting distance of the brave little kingdom in those days. Then had followed a

period of imperialistic expansion and the formulation of the largest empire within Europe. With the advent of Christianity to Lithuania, had come a softening process that was actually a national policy of reserve and retreat.

Now having suffered slavery at the hands of the Poles and Russians, they were forced to endure the strain of supporting an occupational force of Germans. It was difficult for the Lithuanian to keep silence while the Germans systematically set about the task of despoiling some 50% of her forests and drawing everything of value from the stricken land.

The Lithuanians in Russia also grew more vocal, and various patriots arose to plead the cause of Lithuania. The leaders (Dr. Martinus Ycas and others) in Petrograd had formed the Lithuanian National Council. When the Red revolution struck Russia in March 1917, these leaders were forced to flee. Their pleas to date had been for political autonomy within the Russian state. They were forced to drop all thoughts of future collaboration with Russia and to formulate a constitutional program for the projected State. This group met at Voronezh and sought to bring an orderly demand for Lithuanian rights.

The movement within Lithuania itself was to prove more efficacious, though the supplementary action of all Lithuanian patriots gave inspiration and direction to the work. Their formulations called for a request that the German force of occupation quit the land, and for the establishment of a free and independent Lithuania with access to the Baltic Sea.

Believing that the time of deliverance was close at hand, the Lithuanians gathered some 200 delegates, representing various factions within Lithuania proper, in the now famous meeting of September 18 to Sept. 23, 1917, at Vilnius. This assembly chose twenty men to head a provisional government and act until such a time when a Constituent Congress could convene to draw up a Constitution of the proposed independent State.

Mr. Antanas Smetona was chosen President of this Taryba.* (In the spring of 1919 he was elected President of Lithuania.) The functioning of this provisional government was difficult in the extreme, since the Germans were very much in military evidence.

* The Lithuanian Assembly.

On December 11, 1917, the Taryba adopted some strange resolutions, for they quite outspokenly solicited the aid of Germany in the reconstruction period proposed for the new state. They pledged the new nation to a perpetual and lasting peace with Germany.

Germany had promptly availed itself of the condition of unrest in Russia to start a new and determined drive towards the principal Russian cities. Their armies advanced far in Estonia and swung in a dangerous orbit towards Moscow. The Reds were forced to meet the Germans at Brest-Litovsk and agree to the onerous peace terms. Russia itself was tiring of war. The Provisional government under Kerensky had sought to establish peace and order following the March, 1917 revolution. By November, 1917, the followers of Lenin and Trotsky were in power and Estonia and Latvia made declarations of independence.

The German Kaiser granted *de jure* recognition of the Lithuanian Republic on the basis of their favorably worded December resolution. This recognition was made public notwithstanding two very important developments, namely the German-Russian opinions as expressed in the treaty of Brest-Litovsk signed on March 3, 1918, and the resolution of the Lithuanian Taryba given on February 16, 1918. This resolution read: "The Taryba of Lithuania, as the sole representative of the Lithuanian people, in conformity with the recognized right to national self-determination, and in accordance with the resolution of the Conference of Lithuania held in Vilnius, September 18-23, 1917, does hereby proclaim the restitution of the independent State of Lithuania, founded on democratic principles, with Vilnius as its capital and declares the rupture of all ties which formerly bound this State to other nations."

Thus the die was cast and Lithuania was pledged to the cause of complete and untrammelled liberty. However, the Germans still played their trump card. They let it be known that some sort of alignment with Germany would be preferred for military and economic reasons.

After much discussion the Taryba was constrained by the Christian Democrats to invite a certain German Prince of the Catholic persuasion to ascend the throne as Mindaugas II, King of Lithuania. This invitation was extended to Duke William of

Urach, said to be a blood descendant of the old hero King of Lithuania. When military defeat of Germany appeared to be likely, the German high command intimated that complete governmental powers would shortly be turned over to the Lithuanians and on November 2, 1918, the Taryba withdrew the invitation which had been extended to Duke William, preferring to leave the final determination to the Constituent Congress which would soon be convened.

The Armistice Convention had provided for the evacuation of territories formerly a part of the Russian Empire but now showing evidence of self-determination. In Articles 14 and 16 we find provision made for the orderly withdrawal of German forces. They were asked to give adequate protection to these infant nations, to abstain from further military requisitioning of food, supplies for homeland consumption, rolling stock, etc., and to withdraw slowly but surely.

They were, in effect, asked to cooperate with the self determining nations without compensation and, of course, they refused to play such a role. Their divisions rolled homeward with typical German speed and thoroughness, taking with them various materials of value. Many soldiers traded rifles and machine guns to the Lithuanians for stocks of butter, hogs, geese, etc., that they knew would be appreciated by their families.

On November 5, 1918, Voldemaras was asked by Smetona to form a Cabinet. He and the Taryba were still acting as a Provisional Government with precious little support. They epitomized the patriotism of Lithuania that had so long been vocal because of the efforts of the intelligentsia. Now they were put to the test. Four years of warfare had taken its toll from the land and people.

CHAPTER NINE.

THE PERIOD OF RESTORED INDEPENDENCE.

It has been said that the First World War destroyed approximately 50,000 homes and buildings in Lithuania. The soldiers of the Tsar and the soldiers of the Kaiser had exacted their terrific toll for the unsolicited "protection of occupation." They had stolen or destroyed a considerable portion of the Lithuanian wealth, including 40% of the horses; 50% of the cattle; 45 per cent of the swine; and 30% of the sheep and goats. Note that these losses of livestock represented the best of the lot. In addition, the bank savings and confidence in foreign currency had largely disappeared. The scars of war were clearly seen on the populace and epidemics threatened. This was the scene confronting the newly organized government when they bravely set forth on the course of democracy in the year 1918.

The government was land conscious. They understood that true Lithuanian economy must necessarily be built upon the soil. To complicate their problem of proper land distribution were the twin evils of indiscriminate tree stealing by the Germans with subsequent reforestation needs and the outmoded Russian land division system which had been designed to group farm laborers about a village nucleus. To add to these worries, the Russian Bolsheviks advanced, retreated and advanced again to be followed by the Poles who promptly disregarded the Lithuanian claims to their ancient capital city of Vilnius and seized the whole territory surrounding it.

The new government was not dismayed. It tackled each problem with a zeal born of desperation. Since the wandering armies denuded the land of all movable metal that came to their attention, including all arms and weapons that could be used, arrangements were considered to float a loan with which to procure an initial supply of these articles so urgently needed for protection and industry. The Russians had allowed a token payment of 3,000,000 gold roubles and, later, returned some of the rusted booty that had been taken. Most efficacious, however, was the loan for 100,000,000 German marks, which was obtained from Germany through the instrumentality of the Lithuanian National Council. This act, confirming the loan, was signed by Antanas

Smetona, Chairman of the Council, at the end of 1918. The loan was realized bit by bit during the months following.

An agreement was made with a private German firm whereby arms were secured for the valiant Lithuanian volunteers. The arms were of a poor quality but sufficed for the needy moment. Eventually, better equipment was secured from the German Reich on the account of the loan. It has been asserted that various intrepid Lithuanian patriots secured arms and ammunition in exchange for farm produce but apparently this traffic was quite restricted.

Greatest of all losses to the newly reborn Lithuanian nation was that of manpower. She had given generously to the defense of Russia and it has been estimated that 40% of the 100,000 troops were counted as war casualties. Varied accounts point to the absolute degree of heroism with which many of these men rushed to the attack with pitchforks, staves and even bare hands. The German troops admitted the truth that the soldiers from the Baltic States were tops in courage and strength, needing only an enlightened command.

Leaders of the new government were Antanas Smetona, Martinas Ycas, Rev. Mironas, Kazys Bizauskas, Ernest Galvanauskas, Mykolas Slezevicius and others. Drawing loose ends together, taking swift stock of what was on hand and expertly co-ordinating the various factions, this admirably constituted Taryba soon had complete charge of the desperate situation.

The internal policies were carefully studied and regulated. Such institutions as were most necessary were given first care. Life in independent Lithuania became not only bearable but interesting. The government took over such buildings that had been left by the Russian administration. Schools were established and a building program initiated. The Jews of Lithuania contributed in a large measure to the re-establishment of trade and industry. The military leaders took charge of the various campaigns that became necessary to keep out would be despoilers. Suffice it to say that the military actions were necessary through 1919 and 1920.

The Taryba (Council) entrusted the work of Peace Conference representation to Mr. Voldemaras. This worthy gentleman, together with the delegates from Latvia and Estonia, was obliged

to stand in the corridors of the Conference Halls and wait. He was able to make only an occasional declaration to the Conference Sessions. Germany recognized Lithuania *de facto* at the end of 1918. Other recognitions followed in due course of time but this work of representation was most difficult because the victorious Allied Nations were not certain of their policies and were jealous of one another.

To Dr. Ycas and Professor Jurgutis fell the lot of arranging various financial matters of the nation. The latter is noteworthy for having introduced the litas* as the basis of Lithuanian valuta in the fall of 1922. Mr. Tubelis should also be mentioned in this connection as one having enlightened and advanced ideas of national financing. His work in connection with the Lithuanian Cooperatives was outstanding.

Several other loans were floated during this early period of the restored Republic. Lithuanians in America raised gifts for the motherland. The American government advanced a modest loan of something like \$5,000,000. The Swedish government made an agreement whereby they supplied machinery and necessary materials for the match industry (which they monopolized). They also set in motion such measures that were calculated to benefit the Lithuanian-Swedish trade.

The government quite wisely recognized that the backbone of the nation was the peasant. They fitted together their economy so that he should get the best possible opportunity to prosper. Cooperatives were set up in order that many people might return to the soil and build their homes. Loans were made directly to the farmers so they might get lumber for new homes, fencing materials for their gardens, machinery for the fields and grain, livestock, etc. It was literally a national financing proposition and credit must be given the enlightened leadership that made it possible. The newly awakened Republic built securely and well. Eventually 80% of the people lived on farms.

The avenues of trade were speedily opened up to the hungry post war Europe. Lithuania was a natural storehouse of

* The Lithuanian currency was kept at such a point of regulation that it consistently avoided the pitfalls of depreciation and remained on the gold standard until the second Russian invasion of 1940.

food. From its soil could be coaxed millions of tons of potatoes, vegetables, flax, grains of all kinds, and other farm produce. In addition, the Lithuanian livestock tender carefully built up herds and flocks to fill the orders for hams, bacon, poultry, eggs etc., that flowed into the country. Special attention was given to breeding choice animals so that returns would be greater.

We have seen how the Lithuanian nation set its house in order in a warlike atmosphere. The farmer paused in the course of his plowing to pick up a rifle to repel a would be invader. Russians, Poles and German adventurers were turned back in order. The government was obliged to move back and forth from Vilnius to Kaunas, finally setting up their headquarters in the latter city which became the provisional capital.

Simultaneously, the Estonians and Latvians were carrying on their wars of liberation. General Laidoner in Estonia received good support from the British to drive the Red legions from their land. The Latvians drove out the Reds and then turned on the German adventurers to liberate Riga and eventually Libau. Wars meant Peace Talks and Peace Settlements. The Baltic States proved expert dealers in the international work. Only the attitude of Poland with regard to the Vilnius situation could not be understood and this problem remained a grievous one for many years.

The political picture is not always clear during this formative period of post war history. The patriots had returned to their fatherland with the firm intent and purpose of securely establishing their beloved country on a secure basis. The Taryba had emerged* by common consent. Well chosen, it had spoken resolutely even while the firm hand of Germany rested in occupational security over the land. By the fall of 1918, a Constitution had been published in Vilnius whereby the Executive Authority was vested in a Presidium of the Taryba. This Presidium was composed of the Council officers: Mr. Antanas Smetona, President; Rev. Staugaitis, Vice President; and Mr. Silingas, Secretary. It is to be noted that all acts of the Council required the signature of these officers.

* The ten members of the original Taryba were chosen by lot at Vilnius.

Patriots have a way of doing things quite well and very directly. Lithuania needed men of action and she had them. Each worked overtime at his allotted tasks. Mr. Voldemaras sought interviews with influential Peace Conference members. He literally haunted the offices of the victorious Allied Nations representatives. He paced the Conference halls and offered various representations on Lithuania's behalf. In time, this work of fighting over a foreign policy with treaty-makers became lighter with the recognition of Lithuania and its eventual admission into the League of Nations.

Of much greater importance to the struggling Republic was the work of Antanas Smetona who, in addition to his work of directing home policies as President of the Taryba, went to Germany to negotiate the loan of 100,000,000 marks. Signatures were affixed to this document on Dec. 1, 1918. Mr. Smetona returned to Kaunas and noted the socialistic pangs of the newly reborn Republic. Mr. Slezevicius emerged as the strong man of the socialistic elements who demanded a greater share of representation.

On January 17, 1919, a National Conference was held in Kaunas to consider the various problems posed by the Leftists. Some 200 delegates had been chosen from the portions of Lithuania not occupied by the enemy. These delegates promptly ratified the measures of the Taryba and considered the proposed Constitution. It was noted that the Left and Right portions of Lithuanian representation were becoming more clearly defined. A study of the various Cabinets reflects the fierce desire of all elements to enter directly into the governmental picture.

The President of the Council, Mr. Smetona, now undertook the very important assignment of developing a good neighbor policy with the Scandinavian powers. He visited the countries of Norway, Sweden and Denmark. He was of the opinion that these friendly nations had much in common with Lithuania and could aid materially in the working out of certain economic problems. This Scandinavian sojourn was also a well deserved vacation. He returned home during the last week of March to consider the new demands for a Coalition Government to be headed by a President of the Nation. Note that the Constitution was to be changed so that, among other things, the executive powers would be vested in a President rather than in a Collective Presidium. The National Council was to be suspended but not dis-

missed. The President and his government de facto was to formulate the laws and orders. The Chief of Staff was to be appointed directly by the President. All Acts were to require the signature of the Prime Minister or such Minister directly concerned with the Act. Such were the proposals presented to the Lithuanian Taryba government at the end of March, 1919. During this political rumpus the enemies continued to threaten, and Lithuanian armies were in the field.

On April 4, 1919, Mr. Smetona was chosen the first President of the Republic. He was chosen by the duly elected representatives of the National Council together with representatives of the Jewish and White Russian minorities. Recognizing the strength of the Leftist elements, he named Mr. Slezevicius as Prime Minister and directed him to form a government. Thus emerged the strongest representative government possible, with 14 Ministers chosen from all the groups. There were also Ministers to represent the interest of the Jewish and White Russian minorities. This government continued until October of the same year, when a further division occurred, and Mr. Galvanuskas was asked to form a Cabinet.

Looking back to the battlefield, we observe that the German General Von der Goltz arrived in Libau on or about April 16th, 1919. Ostensibly sent to aid the Latvians drive back the Bolsheviks, he proved not only very capable as a military leader, but also quite susceptible to political dreams. The Latvians had chosen a Lutheran clergyman to head their State. This Dr. M. A. Niedra proved himself a devoted leader of the Latvians, but he obviously was little concerned about perpetuating himself in office for he listened carefully to the advice of the General. Incidentally, the Latvian forces were augmented by a considerable number of German troopers who readily joined in the new assignments. This force speedily drove the Bolsheviks to Riga and beyond.

In the north, General Laidoner of the Estonians had cooperated with a Northern Latvian army to rid the country of the Bolshevik pest. In this area the phantom ghost, General Yudenich, was also operating. Some coordination of military effort between these two forces was attained in the drive against Pskov but Yudenich lacked vision and understanding of the social revolutions then in progress. He regarded all of the Baltic peoples as upstarts and would agree to no guarantees. He advanced alone against Mos-

cow and could have taken the city; but for some reason he hesitated, retreated, and disappeared. Yudenich's army silently fell apart and was no more.

General Von der Goltz was now suspected of ulterior motives and the Northern Latvian army asked him to quit the land. When he refused, they advanced to deal him a blow at Wenden. He withdrew his forces to the vicinity of Riga where they remained for a short time. The Allied Nations then asked General Von der Goltz to retire and, quite reluctantly, that worthy German General left the "promising field of operations."

He left behind a certain disgruntled adventurer who had served under him as a Colonel, but who was not so eager to quit the field. This fellow was known as Colonel Bermond, and soon proved himself an able organizer and mischievous fellow. Though Riga had been evacuated on July 3rd, and the new Latvian government had been set up there on July 7th, the territory between Riga and Libau was held by the irregulars under Bermond. Spasmodic fighting broke out occasionally between the two forces, but not until October when Bermond elected to storm Riga, did the issue come to a showdown. Riga held firm and Colonel Bermond led his stragglers into Lithuania. Here he met the Lithuanian army at Siauliai and was completely repulsed. His army disintegrated in much the same manner as that of Yudenich. Thus did the Baltic States deal with military adventurers.

Meanwhile, the Poles had been actively engaging the Bolsheviks on their own front. The French had given every encouragement to the Polish nation and had supplied them with materials of war, financial loans, and military leadership. General Weygand led the drive which sent the Bolsheviks reeling back after they had pushed almost to the city of Warsaw. During these operations the Poles had been in the Lithuanian capital city of Vilnius, only to lose it later in the summer. They speedily brought accusations against the Lithuanians of having exposed their flank by refusing to join them in the common fight against the Red scourge. French diplomacy was quite evident in the Polish treatment of Lithuania and the subsequent refusal of the League to justly settle the controversy which followed the steal of Vilnius.

The first Baltic Conference had been held in Helsinki in January, 1920. Five powers were represented, namely, Finland, Es-

tonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. At this meeting, the Finns asked for a very realistic policy with regard to all would-be aggressors, and pointed out that the greatest immediate danger was Russia. They asked for a coordinated foreign policy, arguing that the voice of five powers would more readily be heard, when bargaining, than if each pursued a single course. It was to be a defensive union.

No definite results were obtained, since confidence was lacking.

Much had been accomplished in Lithuania during 1919. Schools had been established. Industry was off to a good start. The government was decidedly paternalistic and sought to encourage every constituent part. Farmers were directly financed. The Co-operative Societies had the financial blessing of the nation and prospered. Lithuania was digging in and looking abroad for markets even while concluding the successful fight against the Russians.

In April, 1920, Mr. Smetona, President of the Republic, resigned so that the duly elected Constituent Congress (Seimas) could undertake its work without delay. This body was representative of Lithuanian life. 112 men had been chosen from all walks of life: 10 lawyers, 10 writers, 8 physicians, 7 civil employees, 6 army men, 3 engineers, 3 representatives of the Cooperatives, 3 artisans, 22 farmers, 30 professors and priests, and 10 unclassified.

Good men and true, they met in Kaunas on May 15, 1920, to consider a model Constitution for the nation. One of the provisions carried over was that the person chosen to act as President of the Congress should be the President of the Nation.

M. A. Stulginskis was chosen to fill this post. His first term extended to August, 1922. He was then reelected for a second term which extended from August, 1922 to June, 1926.

On July 12, 1920, the Lithuanians concluded a Treaty with Russia whereby they received full recognition. It is interesting to note that the Russians asked the Lithuanians to renounce all rights to the greater territory extending towards the Black Sea and which had, at one time, been under Lithuanian control. In return, they recognized the inalienable rights of the Lithuanians to their origin-

al homelands which had become known as the administrative regions of Kaunas, Gardinas, Vilnius and Suvalkai.*

On July 15th, 1920, the new Lithuanian government moved to Vilnius, a city which had many fine government buildings so necessary for the proper functioning of the various ministries. It is difficult for the stranger to appreciate the unique affection that the Lithuanian holds for this venerable city of 200,000 people. It was founded by one of her greatest heroes during the period known as the Golden Age of Lithuania. Here lies buried some of her dearest leaders.

The Cabinet of Mr. Grinius, Prime Minister under President Stulginskis, was as follows:

Minister of Finance, Trade, and Commerce; Galvanauskas
Minister of Communications; Galvanauskas
Minister of Foreign Affairs; Purickis
Minister of Defense; Lt. Col. Zukas
Minister of Interior; Skipitis
Minister of Education; Bizauskas
Minister of Agriculture; Aleksa
Minister of Justice; Karoblis

Mr. Bizauskas, Minister of Education during this Cabinet and later Vice Prime Minister of Lithuania, told me an interesting account from these early days. He said that a survey among the Professors employed at the University of Vilnius in July, 1920, revealed that 80% understood and could use the Lithuanian language. Later, when the forces of General Zeligowski neared the city, only four professors admitted any knowledge of the language.

In August, 1920, a second Baltic Conference was held; this time at Bulduri, Latvia. Again the five Powers were represented and various proposals were considered for undertaking joint measures against common enemies. Lacking again was the necessary faith in one another. Now a strict nationalism was preferred and this meant separate policies with first regard given the home nation. The warning note of Finland's plea for a united front went unheeded.

* "The Boundaries of Lithuania" by J. Zilius. Russia recognized Lithuania de jure and admitted the validity of her claim to approximately 88,000 square kilometers, or a region the size of Wisconsin.

On August 11, 1920, the Latvians signed their Treaty of Peace with Red Russia. Last of the three Baltic States to enter into satisfactory negotiations with the new Russian State, they received their guarantees of territorial independence. Even at this early hour, the Baltic States felt apprehensive about Russia, with Estonia and Latvia the most alert. Lithuania felt more secure, being further removed.

Fighting was still going on between the Russians and the Poles. Occasionally the Polish forces came in contact with Lithuanian forces and some desultory fighting ensued. The Lithuanian government grew fearful of the Polish attitude which seemed to be following the line of least resistance without any guarantees. Various attempts to draw a line of demarcation between Lithuania and Poland proved unsuccessful.

On October 7, 1920, the plenipotentiaries of the two nations met in solemn session to discuss the terms of the Peace Treaty. Polish diplomacy was of the rarest and slickest variety, saying one thing while meaning another. The Lithuanians were taken in by their erstwhile allies. They had admitted the defection of Lithuanian inhabitants in and about Suvalkai* but insisted on the recognition of their claim to Vilnius. They also insisted that the city and environs of Gardinas be left within the boundaries of the newly constituted Lithuanian State.

The Poles, determined to regain Vilnius at any price, despatched a force of some 15,000 men under the leadership of General Zeligowski to wage war on the Lithuanians. It was October 8, 1920, and the Polish force met with little opposition.

A Polish priest related to me in Kaunas how he had set forth with Zeligowski in the drive against Vilnius. It was his understanding that the Roman Church favored a Roman Province between Poland and Lithuania wherein both peoples could live in peace. This new State would also include Latgalia which was largely Roman Catholic.

Various repercussions followed Poland's sudden and audacious move. The Lithuanian government immediately withdrew to the city of Kaunas, then a sprawling town of some 40,000 people.

* The Poles had registered a protest with the League of Nations when Lithuanian troops entered the province of Suvalkai despite the fact that this region had been ceded to Lithuania by Russia (last ruler) in the Treaty of Moscow, July 12, 1920.

The Allied Commission promptly left Vilnius in disgust and washed their hands of the whole affair. The five power Baltic group was thrown into a complete reverse and all hope of ever uniting them in a front against the common aggressor went glimmering. The Poles had chosen to seize and hold the vital Vilnius Territory, disregarding all ethnological and ethnographical claims. They stated that their left flank must not be exposed against the enemy. France backed up her pet link in the Cordon Sanitaire, and the League of Nations was impotent.

Mr. Powell in his "Thunder over Europe" quotes Sir Robert Donald, an enlightened British scholar as saying: "The enormity of the outrage committed by General Zeligowski, who declared he was acting on his own initiative, unknown to the Polish government or the heads of the army, is all the worse when, as was discovered, the raid had been planned by Marshal Pilsudski. Later, Mr. Pilsudski informed the Supreme Council that his government disavowed the deed and condemned General Zeligowski. The ink on the treaty which Poland signed by the hand of Pilsudski was not dry when the conspiracy to raid the town and province of Vilnius was hatched."

This incident assumed international importance since it made for an unstabilized condition in Eastern Europe. Estonia, Latvia and Finland felt that they no longer could hope for a united effort with the two countries so directly engaged in a feud. Various proposals were advanced, but all seemed to lack the proper understanding of the case. Three leading jurists were invited to submit their juridical opinions. These individuals, versed in international law and procedure, stated that Lithuania could have only one solution to the problem and that was the return of the territory originally ceded to her by Russia.

One of the Committees, designated by the League to find a working formula, worked under the leadership of Mr. Hymans of Belgium. This Committee formulated the so called Hymans Proposal which was to the effect that the Vilnius Territory be incorporated into Lithuania as an autonomous canton, with the proviso that Lithuania consummate a military and economic alliance with Poland. This was rejected by Lithuania.

Lithuania decided promptly upon a course of complete withdrawal from intercourse with her perfidious neighbor. It pained

her when the League in 1923 piously washed its hands like a Pontius Pilate. She was further deeply hurt when the Holy See granted complete approval to the arrangement by creating a Polish Archdiocese of the Vilnius Territory.

Since the Russian-Polish Treaty of Peace left the Lithuanian boundary dispute to be settled by the contesting parties, it is well to consider some comparative figures. 88,000 square kilometers with over 4,000,000 inhabitants had been originally determined by the Treaty of Moscow as Lithuanian. Following the Polish seizure of the Vilnius Territory, this area had been reduced to 55,658 square kilometers with approximately 2,500,000 inhabitants.

The border of Lithuania was now 1,258 kilometers in length with 245 miles touching Germany, 91 touching upon the Baltic Sea and the remainder joining with Latvia and then following the shifting line of demarcation whereupon was maintained an alert and armed guard. Occasionally, a flareup would occur.

Let us also remember that in the days following the final tolling of the peace bells in 1920, plans were put into motion to return some of the booty which had been removed by the Russians. This included church bells, some rusted machinery, some rolling stock in need of repair and the like. Practically nothing was recovered from Germany though many materials had "flown west."

The Lithuanian government proved itself adept in caring for all of the problems. Their foreign policy showed no weakness other than a consistent stubbornness to view all attempts to wear Vilnius away from them as international sabotage. Their internal policies were moderate and progressive. The government was supple in change and all parts could be properly characterized as patriotic almost to a fault.

Surely it wasn't equipment that won the day for the Lithuanians in their fight for their hereditary rights of freedom. It was rather their indomitable courage and persistence. It might also be said that their long preparation for this very moment contributed a great deal to the fine results obtained. The defeat of Germany, the overturning of Russia, and the parallel action of the Estonians and Latvians contributed to the final outcome. The defection of the Poles only aggravated a serious problem and set the stage for the loss of liberty in 1939. The loss of their capital city, the subsequent closing of the boundary between Lithuania and Poland,

and the lack of a proper outlet to the Sea were serious problems of the early period: 1918-1923.

The three Baltic States were quite willing to settle their own boundary disputes. Mr. Tallents and Sir Simpson* were called upon to arbitrate in these negotiations.

The three small States had quite willingly entered the League of Nations on September 22, 1921. For a long time, they faithfully adhered to every provision of this august body, though Lithuania received very little consideration in the matter of her Polish problem. It was only after the League had been absolutely demonstrated as impotent that the Baltic States followed a course of armed neutrality with a keen eye to the political weather.

Though troubled by the Polish occupation of her capital city of Vilnius, Lithuania nevertheless set her house in order. Kaunas was designated the provisional capital city and the great work of modernization set in. The tremendous changes wrought in this one Lithuanian city are worthy of full recounting but space forbids. Suffice it to say that new buildings arose with a grim consistency born of necessity. The great street leading from the President's palace to the large Orthodox garrison Church was named Laisves Aleja and became the nucleus around which the city grew. The city became a severe mixture of old and new, for the ghetto remained almost untouched together with the castle ruins and the ancient market places. New parks and fine avenues were graced by modernistic apartment buildings that were of the new world mold. Modern conveniences were at hand and the population increased to over 130,000 in 1940.

The central government at Kaunas worked diligently on the tasks at hand. They prosecuted a successful defense of their homeland and arranged the program for internal works to meet the needs of peace. Almost immediately, they cast out the outmoded Russian system of weights and measures in preference for the widely used Metric system. Thus they served notice that they were definitely facing west where true progress and real freedom were actualities. Economically, culturally, and religiously they sought to strengthen western ties.

* Sir Simpson firmly advised the Lithuanian government to press demands for Vilnius and the surrounding territory minus Gardinas and Suvalkai. In the Latvian dispute, he advised a compromise.

All means of communication came under their immediate attention. Intensive modernization of railroads, highways, telephone, telegraph, and radio was begun. In the work of building up sufficient railway service, they had been aided by the German occupation with respect to the standardizing of the gauge. Much of the rolling stock had disappeared and had to be replaced. Engineers were set to study the primary and secondary system of highways. Bridges were built and grades were put in where needed. The highway programs were long range studies and continuous progress was made as money became available and traffic warranted the improvement. Following the acquisition of the Klaipeda Territory in January, 1923, the government built a fine super highway connecting Kaunas with Klaipeda and maintained it in commendable fashion. The Russian invasion following the return to Germany of the seaport Klaipeda arrested the east-west highway program on which so much money and time had been spent.

Perhaps the most commendable program of reform set into motion during these days was that pertaining to Agriculture. Lithuanian leaders determined to place as many people upon the land as possible. By 1937, comparative figures showed the following percentage of farmers within the countries: 74 per cent in Lithuania; Poland, 73 per cent; Latvia, 69 per cent; Estonia, 66 per cent; Finland, 65 per cent; Sweden, 41 per cent. (Official Statistics as contained in "The Lithuanian Government Statistical Almanac for 1937.")

Large estates were broken into smaller sections with due regard for just compensation to rightful owners. It was agreed that an estate owner who wished to remain on his land might retain a sufficiently large section of land to farm well. Model farms were allowed to continue operation as long as they showed a willingness to fully cooperate with the governmental policy. Such leaders in the work of land reform as Mr. Tubelis and Mr. Galvanauskas, insisted that due regard be given the necessary task of building the export trade of the country.* All people who came into the category of farming population were encouraged in the better breeding of cattle, selective grain growing, better

* Other writers such as Rev. Krupavicius and Rimka expressed their views also. The latter proposed in a pamphlet on the subject that Lithuania become a Prussian Province. Smetona stood firm on the question of agrarian reform and this might be termed his first break with the Christian Democrat Party.

flax production, and the modernization of the dairy industry. Every farmer must strive to be an excellent producer for the common good of all. The courses of education available to young farmers were extensive. Cooperative Societies were encouraged by governmental grants and did accomplish the great tasks assigned to them.

The government had awarded grants of land to those who volunteered their services to the nation in its hour of trial. Some sold their land, others traded for desirable farms. The land that was classified as timber land came under the direct supervision of the Forestry Department of the Agricultural section.

There was a definite emphasis upon the small farms. Farmers were urged to build their homes on the most advantageous location so that the best utilization could be made of the land with the least loss of time. The old village farm centers that had gradually come into being were frowned upon. The American farm was held forth as an ideal, and diversification advised so that a high degree of self sufficiency could be attained. By 1930, 200,000 hectares had been distributed to small land holders. 300,000 hectares were distributed to landless peasants. Most encouraging was the fact that 90% of the farmers owned their own land. Only 8% of the farmers could be listed as tenant farmers.

Dr. Kriksciunas, in his "Agriculture in Lithuania" has compiled an interesting table. It is as follows:

Area	No. of farms	Total area	% of total area
1-2 hectares,*	13,797	18,862	.44%
2-5 hectares,	39,666	135,214	3.13
5-8 hectares,	45,882	295,307	6.84
8-10 hectares,	32,355	287,590	6.65
10-12 hectares,	28,060	304,812	7.05
12-15 hectares,	31,512	419,123	9.71
15-20 hectares,	33,236	569,921	13.20
20-30 hectares,	34,197	826,593	19.14
30-50 hectares,	20,597	762,894	17.67
50-100 hectares,	6,476	425,025	9.84
100-150 hectares,	906	108,154	2.50
150-200 hectares,	379	64,169	1.49
200 plus hectares,	317	101,050	2.34
Totals:	287,380	4,318,514	100.00%

* See explanation of Metric System on page 231.

It is apparent that the distribution of land to many farmers allowed for an intensification of the farming program. The liberal credit arrangements made available to the farmers enabled them to properly service their loans. The joint effort of farmers connected directly with the large Cooperative Societies enabled them to enjoy a ready market and to purchase necessary machinery to better farm their land.

On August 8, 1922, the Lithuanian government established its currency on the gold standard. The new unit was termed the litas and was set at .150462 grams of fine gold or the equivalent of one tenth part of the American dollar.

On August 1, 1922, the Lithuanian Constitution was formally adopted. Ernest Galvanauskas was Prime Minister during this year of 1922 and much credit is due him for his patient and enlightened leadership. He was progressive almost to a fault and determined that his country should quickly attain to an envied position in the world society of nations. The Constitution came into being after a thorough study had been made by Lithuanian legal talent of various other instruments including the Weimar Constitution of Germany, the American Constitution, and those of France and Switzerland. The Seimas was to be elected in a free election to serve a term of three years. The President was to be chosen by the Seimas to serve a term of three years. Control of the Seimas was to be invested in the hands of the dominating party or combination of parties.

A BRIEF STUDY OF THE LITHUANIAN CONSTITUTION.

(Prepared by the Lithuanian Information Bureau of London)

The preamble read: "In the name of Almighty God, the Lithuanian people, thankfully recalling the glorious efforts and noble sacrifices of its sons, made to deliver the Motherland, having recreated its State independence and desiring to extend the firm democratic foundations of its independent life, to develop conditions of justice and equity, and to guarantee the equality, freedom and well being of all citizens, and suitable State protection for human labor and morality, through its authorized representatives, convened in the Constituent Assembly, August 1, 1922, has adopted the following Constitution of the Lithuanian Republic."

Its various sections follow: I. 1) General provisions: The State is defined as an independent Republic. 2) The three divisions:

Legislative, Executive and Judicial. 3.) The Constitution is set up as the Supreme Law. 4.) Boundaries are defined. 5.) Administrative districts defined. 6.) The Lithuanian language is the official language. 7.) The State colors are: Yellow, Green and Red, symbolic of the rainbow which is the sign of a promise. The State Arms shall consist of the White Knight on a red background. II. Pertains to the Lithuanian citizen (provisions 8-21). III. Deals with the Seimas (provisions 22-39). IV. The Executive branch of the government, President and Cabinet (provisions 40-63). V. The Court (provisions 64-69). VI. Local Autonomy (provisions 70-72). VII. The Rights of Minorities (provisions 73-74). VIII. National Defense (provisions 83-87). IX. Public Instruction (provisions 78-82). X. Religion (provision 83-87). XI. State Economy (provisions 88-90). XII. State Finance (91-96). XIII. Social Security (97-101). XIV. Amendments (102-103). XI. Introductory Provisions (104-108).

The document was signed by:

A. Stulginskis, President of the Republic
E. Galvanauskas, Prime Minister
V. Jurgutis, Minister of Foreign Affairs
J. Dobkevicius, Minister of Finance, Commerce and Industry
J. Aleksa, Minister of Agriculture and State Domain
Major Slizys, Minister of National Defense
M. Soloveickas, Minister for Jewish Affairs
V. Karoblis, Minister of Justice
P. Juodakis, Minister of Education
K. Oleka, Minister for Home Affairs
B. Tomasevicius, Minister of Communications (ad interim)
D. Siemaska, Minister for White Russian Affairs.

Signed at Kaunas, August 6, 1922.

It is to be noted, in passing, that the Lithuanians set a high goal, namely that of a truly representative democratic government. In reality, this form of government is suited only to people who have progressed to a very high plane of civic consciousness and political perspicuity. With the exception of a handful of Lithuanian intelligentsia, the people on the farms and in the shops cared very little for the high sounding phrases of the new Constitution. They voted as they were directed in small groups. It is true that various parties sprung into existence but they reflect

the personal leadership of individuals or groups rather than any well thought out program. At best one can say there was a Right and Left side to the Seimas. It would seem to the impartial observer that the delegates to the various Diets, which are now called Seimas, kept foremost in their minds the consistent and forward moving program calculated to be within the economic reach of the people.

In order to prepare the people for the correct and proper exercise of their democratic franchise so long denied them under Polish and Russian rule, the government carefully launched an ambitious educational program. In the year 1914, there were 877 Primary Schools caring for approximately 40,000 children. By 1937, there were 2,696 schools of this category caring for 292,187 students. In addition to this number of preparatory schools, there were over 100 secondary schools or Gymnasias (the equivalent of Junior and Senior High School plus the first two years of College) in which more than 20,000 alert Lithuanian youngsters were preparing for their duties in life. The good results of the intense educational system were quite apparent by 1937. To top the educational structure were the various specialized schools, including the Great University of Vytautas at Kaunas where some 4000 students took advanced work under an alert and progressive faculty. There were schools for special training in Music, Art, and Ballet. There were also Vocational Institutions such as the Agricultural Academy at Dotnuva, and the School of Forestry. Lithuania's educational system was attempting and accomplishing the most modern approach to age old problems.

One of the most serious defects of their entire educational program was the lack of cohesion that was evidenced under the strain of foreign threats of domination. I refer to the problems of national interest in such widely varied parochial schools as the German Lutheran, the Jewish, the Polish and the Lithuanian Church Schools. The spirit of Nazism pervaded the German parochial schools. The Jewish schools were hotbeds for Communism. The Polish parochial schools emphasized the Polish question. The Lithuanian Catholic Schools were themselves seats for severe criticism of the Lithuanian government as it was constituted from 1926-1940. It would seem that this parochial division must necessarily carry part of the blame for severe weakness of opinion and lack of coordinated determination during the hour of great peril.

The parochial system originated under the government policy of granting religious concessions to all groups capable of conducting an educational program. Since such a concession was made, the further statements concerning the freedom accorded every man to worship God as he sees fit seem hardly necessary. All Churches enjoyed immunity from taxation, freedom from control, and benefits from State taxation in proportion to their enrollment. Priests, Pastors, and Rabbis further received certain tolls from the performance of ritual acts and recordings. It must be concluded that all Churches enjoyed a definitely preferred position in Lithuania from 1918 - 1940. More for the interest of the tourist than for practical use was the exquisite Moslem mosque where less than one hundred Tartars worshipped. Soldiers of the regular army were required to attend Church services on Sunday morning. It was indeed a stirring sight to see hundreds of stalwart young men marching to their respective Churches.*

The Political Parties of the Land.

Some conception of the political life of the average Lithuanian is reflected in the picture of the Seimas representation. Like other representative bodies, it showed a range of thought from right to left or from conservative thinking to radicalism. On the right side were arraigned most of the Churchmen and their staunch supporters. On the left side were found the followers of Marx. We shall make a short survey of the situation by listing the parties from right to left.

The Christian Democrat party was the strongest numerically and had a firm following amongst the people. This following was held in line by priests and conservative farm leaders who wielded the lash of public opinion in various communities. It had been organized in or about the year 1905, and had worked consistently for greater representation in the Russian Duma and for greater privileges to the masses. In the reconstruction period, it remained the strong Church party, and favored such legislation as was

* Comparisons of the Baltic States show:

	R. Cath.	Lutheran	Illiteracy 1914—1939	Communism estimated
Estonia	2 pct.	78 pct.	4 pct.—1 pct.	7 pct.
Latvia	23 pct.	59 pct.	7 pct.—4 pct.	10 pct.
Lithuania	80 pct.	9.2 pct.	33.4 pct.—10 pct.	4 pct.

The Communist Party in Lithuania was composed of 80 pct. Jews and 20 pct. others who were not happy.

calculated to further the policies of the Church. Strong men listed by this party would include such names as Kasakaitis, Bistras, Karvelis, Krupavicius, Tumenas, and Bizauskas.

In somewhat of a subservient position to this Christian Democrat party and usually aligned with it in matters of policy, were the Peasants Union and The Labor Party. Leaders of the Peasants Union, which was unusually conservative, were Stulginskis, Miksys, and Petrulis. The Labor Party had nothing in common with the radical labor elements and must be considered definitely on the right side of the Chamber. Leaders of this group were Ambrozaitis, Radzevicius, and Kasakaitis.

Crossing over to the line from conservatism to tendencies of radicalism or mild socialism, we find The People's Socialist Party. This party believed very strongly in complete separation of Church and State. It found itself quite often in direct opposition to the Christian Democrats for this reason, especially when matters of internal policy were discussed. It had a gifted leadership and we note such men as Slezevicius, Grinius, and Staugaitis. Rarely in direct control of the government after 1923, it did contribute a great deal through its individual membership to the opposition.

The Social Democrats harbored many Communists in its bosom. Largely drawn from the laboring classes, it proved troublesome at times though, it must be admitted, many of its forward looking policies were considered. The talented Kairys and Cepinskis are listed as the leaders of this group. Many of them firmly believed that private ownership of industry should be entirely eliminated.

The Nationalist Party eventually emerged as the strongest party after 1926. This party had a slow start and literally found its greatest life following the national emergency arising from the 1926 events and the dangers of Bolshevism. This group was developed in the light of the traditional "Ausra" which had its origin in 1884. Noteworthy in this same regard was the influence of the magazine "Varpas" published by Dr. V. Kudirka. The Nationalists listed such names as Smetona, Basanavicius, Tubelis, Aleksa and Skipitis. This party might be termed the "middle way" party.

There were various individuals who preferred to remain outside of the parties. Occasionally they filled Cabinet posts and

must be considered as political leaders. To mention only a few: Martinas Ycas, formerly a near-member of the Nationalist group; Ernest Galvanauskas, formerly a member of the People's Socialist party, but later an independent; Juozas Urbys, and Merkys.

The following chart will more graphically portray the picture:

Parties:	Seimas 1,	2,	3,	4,	5.
Years	20-22	22-23	23-26	26-27	36-41
Christian Democrats	25	15	13	14	0
Peasants Party	18	12	18	11	0
Labor Party	16	11	9	5	0
Nationalist	in other parties until 1926				5
People's Socialist	29	19	18	22	0
Social Democrat	14	11	8	15	0
Minorities	10	5	12	13	3
Totals	112	73	78	85	49

These figures would seem to indicate that the fifth Seimas was little more than a "Yes" body. However, the members were working in entire sympathy with their executives and the conditions can be likened unto a completely Democratic Congress such as America had in the thirties. It modified and supplemented various projects that the Executive initiated and sometimes voted against them.

The Lithuanian leaders held office as follows:

The Taryba served the needs of the nation from September 23, 1917—April 4, 1919.

The Office of President:

Smetona presided from April 4, 1919—May, 1920.

Stulginskis served from May, 1920—August, 1922. First term filled because he was President of the Constituent Congress (Seimas).

Stulginskis headed the government from August, 1922—June 1926. Second term filled as President of Seimas and President of Republic. Constitution now in operation after its adoption on August 1, 1922.

Grinius served from June, 1926—December, 1926. Term is cut short by the coup d'état.



ANTANAS SMETONA, PRESIDENT OF LITHUANIA



Headquarters and Church of Jesuits, and City Hall of Kaunas

Smetona was in power from December, 1926—June, 1940. Smetona took over during the coup d'état and appointed Voldemaras Prime Minister. The two can be considered partners in 1926. Smetona fled from the Bolsheviks in 1940 when they invaded Lithuania.

Prime Ministers under duress: Merkys filled the office temporarily according to a strange provision of the Lithuanian Constitution which provides that in the absence of the President, the Prime Minister should act for him.

Paleckis is placed in the office of Prime Minister and Acting President by the Russian Bolsheviks.

The Office of Prime Minister:

Voldemaras, November 11, 1918 — December 28, 1918 (first term)

Slezevicius, December 28, 1918—March 12, 1919 (first term)

Dovydaitis, March 12, 1919—April 4, 1919

Slezevicius, April 4, 1919—October 7, 1919 (second term)

Galvanauskas, October 7, 1919—June 2, 1920 (first term)

Grinius, June 2, 1920—February 2, 1922

Galvanauskas, February 2, 1922—February 22, 1923 (second term)

Galvanauskas, February 22, 1923—June 29, 1923 (third term)

Galvanauskas, June 29, 1923—June 10, 1924 (fourth term)

Tumenas, June 10, 1924—February 4, 1925

Petrulis, February 4, 1925—November 29, 1925.

Bistras, November 29, 1925—June 7, 1926

Slezevicius, June 7, 1926—December 17, 1926 (third term)

Voldemaras, December 19, 1926—September, 1929

Tubelis, September, 1929—March, 1938

Mironas, March, 1938—March, 1939

Cernius, March, 1939—November, 1939

Merkys, November, 1939—July, 1940

The end of liberty in Lithuania came with the advent of the Bolsheviks. Russia's chosen puppet was Paleckis, a Communist newspaper correspondent, long before in the service of the Soviet Secret G. P. U.

All of these men can be termed Lithuanian patriots with the exception, of course, of Paleckis the traitor. These leaders la-

bored for the good of the masses. They were drawn largely from the rank and file of Lithuanian life. They were not wealthy people who took up politics as an avocation or for purposes of exploitation. They were first, last, and always, men who took office for the purpose of patriotic labor.

The Lithuanian constitution explicitly limits functions and powers of the Prime Minister. Mr. Smetona has explained this in essence as follows:

"According to the Lithuanian Constitution, the President is the Chief of State, while the Prime Minister takes the leading role in the Government. Therefore, acting instead of the President, he is the head only of the Government, and not of the State (71). What is the difference?

"To be the Chief of State means to hold executive power of the State in its highest branches, which powers are the highest mentioned in the Constitution; to convoke the Seimas and dissolve it; to appoint and remove the Prime Minister and his Ministers; to appoint the Chief Comptroller and Chief of Staff; to ratify the treaties with other nations, and so on. The rights and duties of the Prime Minister are also defined in the Constitution, stressing the fact that he is the head of the Government, within the limits of his authority. Therefore the Prime Minister, in the absence of the President, does not take over the functions of the President, but remains Prime Minister and head of the Government, the formation of which was authorized by the President. The 71st paragraph of the Lithuanian Constitution says: 'he executes tasks emanating from the authority of the President' which is a purely secondary function. The President's authority is expressed in the laws of the land and in their execution. Therefore the Prime Minister executes laws and functions of the law; for example, substitution and change in the position of items within the limits of the Budget approved by the Government, changes in the appointment of judges and ordinary appointments of Government employees according to existing laws."

Soviet Russia, determined to break her treaty with Lithuania in the fall of 1940, demanded by ultimatum that a Lithuanian Prime Minister who was acceptable to Moscow be appointed and to permit an undefined number of the Red troops into Lithuanian territory. The President did not agree to the ultimatum.

According to the 71st paragraph of the Constitution, with the approval of the entire Cabinet of Ministers, he crossed the western border on June 15 when the Red Army was crossing the eastern frontier. He left his country with his family not only because his liberty and his life were threatened, but also because he did not wish to give his written approval of the acceptance of the ultimatum as he would have been forced to do if he had stayed. Moscow desired this, and influenced Prime Minister Merkys to stop the President at the frontier and return him to Kaunas. When the President refused to comply, his Act of Absence was proclaimed June 17, in the *Vyriasybes Zinios*, official organ of the Government. Moscow knew from the Lithuanian Constitution that only the President has the right to appoint a Prime Minister, and now the President was absent. It was announced over the Kaunas radio that the President had resigned, though such an act of resignation did not and could not exist.

This was done for two reasons:

1. To lower the authority of the President in the eyes of the people.

2. To make it possible to apply the 71st and 102nd paragraphs of the Constitution which say that on the death or resignation of the President, the Prime Minister takes over his duties.

It should be assumed that Merkys was forced to employ a subterfuge and appoint Paleckis as Prime Minister. As soon as he had done this, he was deported to Russia.

Moscow was interested in making the world believe that the Lithuanian Constitution was being applied at least in a formal sense and thus covered up this unheard-of act of violation, giving it a juridical form.

Statement of Lietuvos Bankas

It was largely due to the natural thrift of the Lithuanian people, the ability to engage in hard work, and the enlightened leadership, that the little country attained an enviable position amongst nations. Economically she maintained a higher comparative place than her larger neighbors. This is aptly demonstrated by the statement of the official Lietuvos Bankos which served the nation in a manner similar to that rendered England by the Bank of England.

The Statement of the Lietuvos Bankas is as follows (in million lits):

Assets	Dec. 31, 1922	Dec. 31, 1930	Dec. 31, 1932
1. Gold Reserve	15	39	49
2. Silver and Coins	2	4.3	4.3
3. Foreign Currency	17.9	48.3	15.9
4. Discounts, Loans	8.5	101.6	91.9
5. Other assets	2.1	11.1	11.8
Totals	45.5	204.3	172.9
Liabilities			
1. Capital stock	10.9	12	12
2. Reserve stock	0.	1.5	2
3. Banknotes circulating ...	30.3	117.1	96
4. Deposits	2.1	56.9	57.1
5. Other liabilities	2.2	16.8	5.8
Totals	45.5	204.3	172.9

The period of history between 1918 and 1923 might be accurately termed the period of trial and error. It was definitely an experiment in democracy. Most satisfying to Lithuanians is the unbiased judgment that it was most surely going. The definite gains are duly recorded and Lithuanians can justly refer to this period with pride of achievement. There is a proverb extant in the land, "When one is in a hurry, it is best to go slowly." Consider this statement carefully and you will glimpse the kernel of their success. Our American equivalent would be "Slow but Sure."

The Lithuanian nation is a building nation. They did not give expression to their feelings as did the more volative Pole who, for instance, tore down the magnificent Orthodox Cathedral in Warsaw because it reminded them of the Russian tyrant. The Lithuanians took the Russian Cathedral in Kaunas and named it their Roman Catholic Garrison Church. They did not blow up the antiquated fortress system left by the Russians, but turned them into delightful parks over which the young could roam on picnics. They utilized every bit of heritage that came into their possession even though the very things themselves were reminiscent of the hated Russian.

Still in existence were the four legal systems, namely the Baltic Code in Palanga, the German law in Klaipeda, the Napoleonic Code and Russian Law. Lawyers found it necessary to carry on in all four of these systems. They diligently studied a great variety of opinions and legal threads. It was all very confusing to the American onlooker. The Lithuanian Code had been in disuse since the beginning of the 19th century.

Though chiefly concerned with the reforms and economic construction, the Lithuanian leaders steered a cautious course in the matter of foreign policy. The Vilnius Problem had been forced upon them by the action of General Zeligowski, and remained a thorn in the flesh until the year 1938 when the matter was settled by the Polish "either, or" ultimatum. The Memel (Klaipeda) Problem was also a matter of grave concern for the fast stepping nation so intent on making an honest living in a very dishonest world.

The United States of America had recognized Lithuania in rather belated fashion because they awaited the final outcome of the Vilnius Problem. It was on July 28, 1922 that the final exchange of notes of recognition was made. Kaunas was considered the "Provisional Capital" and the American Legation was established there.

The Period from 1923-1926. Period of Expansion and Industrial Growth

World travelers and informed historians knew that the so called Memelland had been lopped off the old German Empire at the conclusion of the World War. Territory hungry France had received permission to administer it as a mandated territory. Under the administration of such inept fellows as Petisne, a flood of illegal stuff filtered into Lithuania proper. French soldiers lolled around the territory while sturdy Germans and Lithuanians plied their industrial trades unheeding. It was a small parcel of the earth's surface, only 1,100 square miles. This stretched 100 miles, tapering from a width of some 10 miles at the shore of the Nemunas river; but it meant a great deal to Lithuania, with its outlet to the sea lanes of the world, the port of Klaipeda.

To the ethnologist, the 150,000 inhabitants, Lutheran in faith and Germanic in culture, presented an interesting study. It was argued that these people were originally of Lithuanian stock.

I can attest to the fact that every indication would make this argument appear very reasonable. I am convinced that most of these people spoke the Lithuanian language and could easily claim Lithuanian kinship. However, the fact that they had sent their sons for many generations to German schools gave them a feeling of being very German indeed. They resented any change. They definitely did not prefer a Free State status nor attachment to Lithuania, but preferred to remain a part of Germany.

The Lithuanian had other plans* for them and forthwith put them into effect. On Jan. 10, 1923, various groups and bands of troopers gathered by the Lithuanian-Memelland border to hear the last instruction from Colonel Budrys and his Captains. The zero hour for this irregular invasion of Memelland had not been definitely set and there was some hesitation. Sometime before, the Lithuanians had decided to stage an uprising within the Territory since they not only had coveted for some time this natural addition to their land but were fearful that it might be given a Free State status or handed to the Poles by the Conference of Ambassadors. The Lithuanians marched in, following the people's demonstration at Heydekrug. A weak resistance was put up by the French garrison which was caught napping. In answer to a hasty summons by the French, the British put in at Klaipeda with a small man of war. This British ship threatened to shell the city unless the Lithuanians promptly withdrew. The Lithuanians apparently told them to go right ahead and proceeded with their occupation of the entire Territory. After some consultations between the contesting parties, it was agreed that the Lithuanians should make a token withdrawal to allow the French to leave in dignity, with the understanding that the subsequent Conference would satisfactorily settle the question.

The Council of Ambassadors met. This body appears to have been one of the most inept and incompetent that ever graced the Council boards. They drew up a twin document known as the Memel Convention and Statute that set the stage for long and almost continuous bickering and strife between the Lithuanian government and the Territory. On March 15, 1923, this same Council formally recognized the Lithuanian-Poland border as most recently defined and then washed their hands of an un-

* According to President Smetona, the Germans favored the Lithuanian more at this time to check the Polish ambition.

pleasant assignment. They had disregarded the Lithuanian-Polish Treaty of 1920 which recognized the city of Vilnius as Lithuanian and temporized on the arrangement of 1923 involving Memelland.

In all fairness to the Lithuanian government, it must be stated that she had been given an implied promise at least that she would receive consideration for her claim to Memelland. Ethnographically she was the only nation that could have justified the lopping off of this choice morsel from old Germany. Economically she had the best of reason to desire it. In fact, the addition of Memelland to Lithuania was mutually beneficial even though the Lithuanian government almost nullified it by constantly seeking to take over the territory by infiltration and by an unwise religious propaganda. These policies caused the Memellander to stand firm against all governmental measures and to proudly proclaim themselves as Memellanders.

More is said about this development under the heading: The Memel Question.

Since we shall consider both the Vilnius and Memel Problems under a separate heading, suffice it to say that the latter proved less vexatious than the first. The acquisition of Memel did give Lithuania a first class port from whence she could reach out and trade with the world. It did bring a certain expansion prosperity to the Territory by this addition of a natural hinterland although the Memellander continued to reject all proposals calculated to bring about closer coordination between them and Lithuania. It did aid, tremendously, the exporting effort of Lithuania.

The Memel Convention, in its final form, was accepted on May 8, 1924 and the Statute was, shortly thereafter, affixed. Lithuania's relation with the Memelland is a long story of thrusts and counterthrusts. The Memellander made up his mind to remain faithful to Germany and there was little to be done about it. Lithuania sought to convince the Memellander that he would gain by cooperation. Relations became perceptibly better when the pro-German Voldemaras became Prime Minister in 1926 and the weak Memel program of the Christian Democrats came to an end.

Lithuania was feeling the impulse of world prosperity (false though it was) during the years following 1923. Her trade in-

creased by leaps and bounds. Her produce found ready markets in Germany, Great Britain, Belgium, and elsewhere.

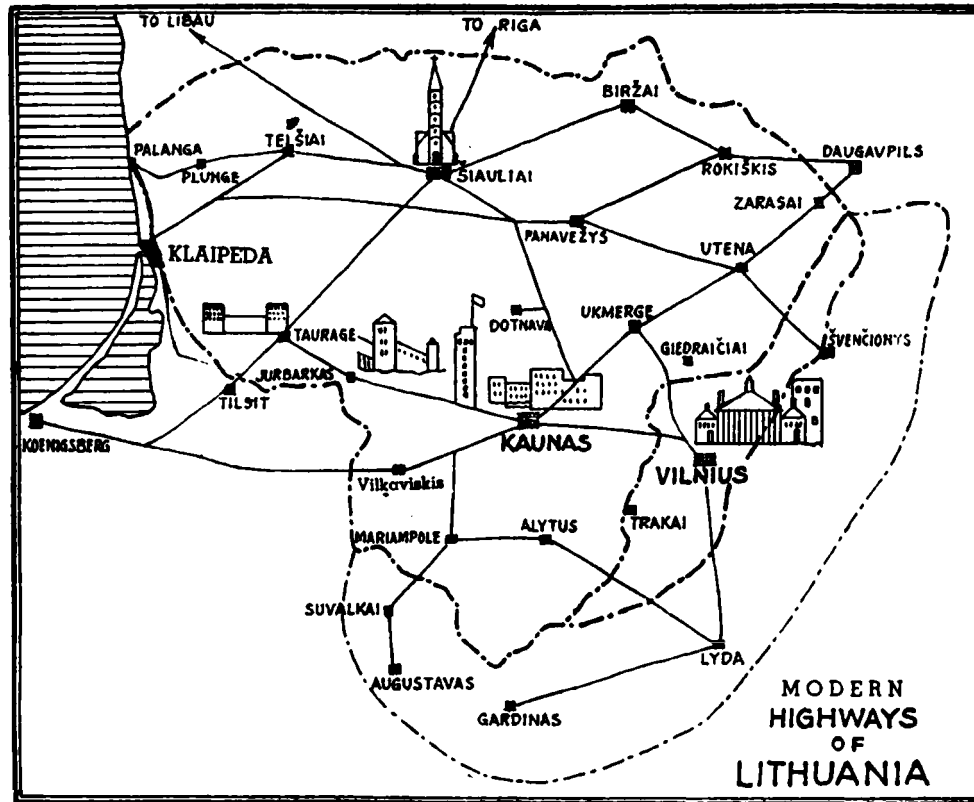
On November 1, 1923, her two Baltic neighbors, Estonia and Latvia signed a Ten Year Treaty of the Mutual Assistance variety. Lithuania, the other Baltic State, was excluded from consideration because of her two special problems, Vilnius and Memel. This Treaty, if not denounced by either of the contracting parties, was to remain in force.

Russia had taken careful note of all proceedings in her "former Baltic windows." She had rejected the offer of the four powers Estonia, Latvia, Finland, and Poland (note that Lithuania is absent in protest of the Polish steal of the Vilnius city and territory) on March 30, 1922 to disarm all frontiers in a spirit of mutual understanding. Mr. Litvinov was sent about to urge separate agreements with the ambitious USSR and to preach the subtle doctrine of Collective Security. This aimless wanderer saw the danger of a growing Germany and pleaded for an acceptance of Russia in Democratic circles.

Lithuania concluded her Agreement with Germany (which regulated frontier traffic and commercial matters) in June, 1924. This agreement supplemented that of May, 1923, wherein relations were regularized. Germany seemed quite anxious to deal in as large a measure as possible.

Lithuania had been obliged to carry on quite independently from the four powers since she was technically at war with one of them (Poland). In May, 1924, the representatives of the three Baltic States had met at Kaunas to consider the extension of the Estonian-Latvian Customs Union to include Lithuania, but complete accord could not be reached. Representatives continued to meet in 1925, and again in 1926, without accomplishing their goal.

On December 30, 1925, a harsh note was sounded in the German *Allgemeine Zeitung*, which used the phrase "in defense of European civilization against the Asiatic barbarians" of Russia. It implied that Germany would have to take this position. The Russians immediately answered through Tchicherin: "While my country is not opposed to the pacific, economic and political union between the Baltic States, it does not like to admit that these same States must act as a barrier between European civilization and us, the Asiatic barbarians."



Such language brought shivers to the practical Lithuanian political leaders who knew the awful reality that their small country lay on the time honored military highway between Russia and Germany. Certain of them were Germanophiles; others were inclined to favor dealing with Russia.

Mr. Slezevicius was of the latter group. He honestly believed that Lithuania could do better by cultivating the friendship and cooperation of the great Russian Union. He was feted in Moscow as a Socialist Lion from neighboring Lithuania. He appeared to be quite impressed with what he was shown in the reborn Russia. Agrarian Russia and Agrarian Lithuania obviously could have very little natural trade, though Lithuania did secure some of the vital necessities such as salt, coal, oil, etc., from Russia, while the latter, perhaps mainly for political reasons, agreed to take hogs and other livestock, while shipping raw products such as timber to the Baltic port of Klaipeda.

The most important advance made in the country during this period seems to have been the well considered Agrarian Reform measures. Rev. M. Krupavicius had led the fight for this reform which limited the original landlords to 200 acres each while creating 65,000 new farms. These reforms sounded the deathknell of Bolshevism in Lithuania since the majority of civilians could now enjoy the prosperity of the land and the security that comes with ownership of the same.

1926 was a significant year in Lithuanian history. It seems definitely to divide the course. Prior to this date, the Lithuanians had dabbled in a form of government that was strange to them. As one scholar has put it, Lithuania had put on shoes in 1918 that were several sizes too large and she stumbled about in them. Democratic principles were well known to Americans who lived after such men as Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and Jefferson but were not fully appreciated by a people who preferred and required strong leadership. Thus it was that in 1926, the various economic, political, cultural and kindred factors suddenly surged to the forefront, and change was imminent.

The Period from 1926 to 1929.

Violent changes of representation.

It has been suggested that Lithuania was in need of governmental changes by the end of 1926. True democracy is not the sim-

plest form of government and certain factors of political, economic, cultural, and personal animosities blended to bring about a change in leadership. The coup d'état of late 1926 can be explained only in this sense that it was rather a culmination of these factors or movements within the country itself.

For many years, the Lithuanian nation had felt a deep resentment towards Poland. This feeling was quite justified for Poland had directly caused their loss of independence. Following the world war, Poland had evidenced a distinctly hostile attitude towards the Lithuanians and were not sympathetic towards her Twentieth Century Renaissance. The capture of Vilnius by the rebel General Zeligowski left all Lithuanians quite anti-Polish, and some wondered just what the Constituent Assembly implied by refusing to mention (in the new Constitution) the fact that Vilnius still must remain the capital city of the land. This feeling of distrust in the leadership of the country from 1923-1926 had some influence on the movement towards revolt.

Another move on the part of the government in 1922, distasteful to many Lithuanians, was the willingness to carefully consider the Hymans proposal that Lithuania become a canton of Poland. The explosion of a bomb under the window of Galvanauskas brought a quick conclusion to such negotiation.

The government of this period had also made the very serious mistake of courting favor with many groups by promising large donations of land and favors which obviously could never be granted. The speeches of the Seimas during this period are quite often naive and sometimes demagogical. The Roman Prelate, Dambrauskas, in his newspaper the "Draugija," calls this assembly "the Seimas of 112 Kings."

The various governments of President Stulginskis met the economic situation with some uncertainty. Direct and indirect taxation was never quite enough to meet the ever growing demands of the nation on the march. The agrarian reform had crippled the earning capacity of the land. For a time, the prices of cereals remained high, but when the readjustments in international supply lines were made, the Lithuanian farm produce met stiff competition. This condition called for more intensive farming.

It might also be mentioned that the people entertained vague fears of the various financial institutions which had been set up.

Several of these new banks failed and the Lithuanian peasant reverted to the practice of digging down his hard won earnings. Credits became dear and, for a time, the demand loans reached a peak of 30% service interest.

It is little wonder that the farmers lost faith in democratic slogans. They found that they themselves had to fix the roads they were primarily interested in and to repair the bridges over which they would haul their loads of produce. They resented the presence of the privileged classes in the large cities and brought their demands to a government which refused to listen.

Political parties could no longer entertain ideas of a coalition. The Christian Democrat party stubbornly held to a course which maintained a status quo. The People's Socialist and Social Democrat parties remained obdurate on the point of complete separation of Church and State, as in America, and the removal of compulsory religious education in schools.

These were among the many factors making for unrest in Lithuania in the year 1926. Though public opinion was not expressed fully in any election, the results of the election of this year showed that the Christian Democrats held 30 seats; the Socialist-Populist Party, 24; the Nationalist Party, 5; the Social Democrat Party, 15; and the Minorities held 11 seats. It made up a Seimas of 85 members. The Populist and the Social Democrat parties formed a coalition and, for needed support, curried the favor of the Minority groups. It is reported that the Seimas often heard the discord of violent argumentation and acrimonious debate. One peasant is rumored to have said, on leaving a session: "Our peasants also know how to insult and shout at one another just like our Seimas representatives, when they have drunk more than is good for them."

In December of the year 1926, the Seimas deliberated on the problem of the State Budget. There was discord between Grinius, Slezevicius, and Staugaitis. The Minister of Defense, Colonel Pa-peckys (of the People's Socialist party) held to the point that the government should approve the proposed appropriations of Defense. The Social Democrats opposed the large appropriation, which was about 17% of the entire budget. On December 17, 1926, various parts of the Army appeared before the Seimas and demanded their dispersal. It should be added also that the Lithuanian Catholics had been kept from the Russian Military Schools

because of their faith and that in the new army were many newly trained officers who had taken only a secondary interest in the political feuding that was going on between the higher "gold braids." These Junior Officers formed an organization known as the SKS which suddenly in 1926 developed a strong interest in the political leadership of the land. It was this group who approached Smetona and proposed a coup d'etat. Chaos threatened at this juncture of Lithuanian history. Voldemaras found it convenient to be in Kybartai. Skipitis and others were attacked in the Seimas. There was a grave need for firm action.

The coup d'etat was to be a bloodless changeover. Kaunas awoke one cold December morning to find the new order in control. Policemen and soldiers guarded the various government buildings. Martial law was promptly proclaimed and suitable announcements were made. Grinius and his government officials were forced to resign their positions. After they had done this, they were liberated. The Seimas, on December 19, 1926, convened to elect Antanas Smetona to the Presidency. Absent were the Social Democrats and most of the minority representatives.

A new government was hastily formed. President Smetona considered two men for the post of Prime Minister, Mr. Voldemaras, a member of the Seimas, and Colonel Merkys. The latter refused the honor since he could muster very little army support, and accordingly Mr. Voldemaras proceeded to choose a Cabinet. It consisted of one Nationalist and several strong men with Conservative leanings.

Prime Minister and Foreign Minister—Voldemaras (Nationalist)

Minister of Justice—Silingas (Farmers League)

Minister of the Interior—Musteikis, Col. (non-party)

Minister of Defense—Merkys, Col. (sympathetic to Farmers League)

Minister of Education—Bistras (Christian Democrat)

Minister of Agriculture—Aleksa (Populist sympathies)

Minister of Finance—Karvelis (Farmers League)

Minister of Communications—Jankevicius (non party)

Comptroller—Milcius (Fed. of Labor)

Names to remember in connection with the part played by the army in this coup d'etat are: General Ladyga; Colonel Plekavičius; Col. Skorupakis; and Colonel Grigaliunas-Glovackis. For

three days, the country was in a bit of confusion. People hurried about from place to place inquiring about the changes wrought and quite unconcernedly went back to their tasks. Peace and quiet prevailed on the third day.

The government speedily removed all persons favorable to the opposition cliques and formed a strong organization. The Nationalist party was born. Once in control of the situation, the Nationalist sentiment began to crystallize and to show itself strongly conservative. No serious changes were proposed for the Constitution and the Christian Democrats grew restive. They finally broke away entirely from the newly born coalition with the Nationalists. Finally in April, 1927, the Seimas was dissolved and, as was expected, the date for convoking a new Seimas set conveniently into the future. Directly preceding the Act of Seimas Dissolution, President Smetona had visited various parts of the country to find a wholesome welcome and to discover that the peasant wanted above all, an assurance of economic security. He visited Roman and Greek Churches, the Lutheran Churches, and the Jewish synagogues. He listened to their advice and received their support. It was a smart political venture and could be likened to the "fireside chats" of a famous American President.

A program was set before the people. Mr. Voldemaras explained that the foreign policy to be observed would include the following points:

1. The country would be kept from entangling alliances.
2. There was to be no retraction of the Vilnius claim.
3. All efforts would be expended in making a satisfactory working arrangement with Estonia and Latvia.
4. A Concordat would be signed with the Vatican.

Mr. Voldemaras pointed out the necessity of changing certain provisions of the Constitution. His view of internal affairs of the country lacked the breadth of vision comparable to that of the foreign situation. He promised little and did little. Lack of action eventually caused his downfall.

When Mr. Tubelis came into the government to replace Mr. Karvelis, Minister of Finance, the following program was presented:

1. To concentrate all private capital by giving it reasonable conditions of investment.

2. To build Cooperatives, aiding them whenever necessary with funds from the Treasury.
3. To invite foreign money to Lithuania by creating opportunities for investment.
4. To inaugurate strict governmental control of credit establishments.
5. To maintain a balanced budget.
6. To stress the value of intensive farming, of animal husbandry, and foreign markets for farm produce.
7. To break up the antiquated village system, to drain swamps, to utilize peat lands and all other reclamation projects that were feasible.
8. To put into force such laws as were necessary to expropriate land considered necessary for the reform program.
9. To prosecute the building program.
10. To institute schools for art, crafts, technical studies, etc.

A great deal of credit is due directly to Mr. Tubelis for his close attention to duty and the skillful use of his talents. As a financier, Mr. Tubelis held a high respect amongst his international colleagues. Lithuanians learned to trust in his judgment and a good confidence existed amongst business men while Tubelis held the financial reins. He further suggested the measures which dealt with:

1. The collaboration between public and private industry.
2. The governmental backing of the Cooperative movement.
3. The preparation of selected men for economic leadership.
4. The development of schools for advanced and specialized leadership.

Not all of the Lithuanians were willing to accept the changes that had been wrought in the governmental structure. Some attempted to stir up trouble within the army groups and, while nothing of note was achieved, the tendency was to linger for a long time. Some of the leaders fled to Poland, while others went to Germany.

In order to understand the Voldemaras administration, we must study the man. Of short stature and temper, he was inordinately proud of his own accomplishments and believed that he could force any and all issues. His willingness to lend an ear to the young officers' clique eventually led to an estrangement

with his tutor and leader, President Antanas Smetona. Voldemaras did not enjoy the full confidence of his own Cabinet and his scheme to form the organization known as "Vilkai" (translated Wolves) in the fall of 1927 met with serious objection.

In the role of Foreign Minister, Voldemaras showed to better advantage. He had been a Professor of Classical History and was a linguist of great ability. He could ably defend his views but lacked sincerity, was unduly suspicious, unreasonably obstinate, superstitious, and lacked a sense of reality.

In the autumn of 1927, he journeyed to Rome where he concluded the signing of the Concordat with the Vatican and a Commercial Agreement with the Quirinal. A Nuncius was sent to Kaunas and the Lithuanian Envoy journeyed to Rome. Almost immediately the question of Lithuanian-Polish relations came into consideration since these two "warring" powers had not arrived at any conclusion of peace. Since obviously the Vatican was quite impotent in driving the Poles from Vilnius, no satisfaction could be obtained in this matter. The Poles put some pressure on Lithuanian schools within the Vilnius Territory as if to dare a discussion of the matter.*

Lithuania promptly complained to the League of Nations. The date for discussing the question was set for December, 1927. Voldemaras was quite astonished at this meeting when Marshal Pilsudski, the bewhiskered Dictator of the Poles, strode in with the Polish Foreign Minister. Before the meeting, the Russians brought pressure to bear upon the Lithuanians through their Minister Arosev, asking that the Lithuanians make a public declaration favoring the recognition of peace as existing between Poland and their country. Voldemaras ignored the instructions sent to him on this point and the question of the schools being closed became secondary in importance. The fiery Marshal Pilsudski rambled to the table and threw down his sword with a loud clatter, saying: "La guerre ou la Paix?" Voldemaras meekly answered: "La Paix." He had uttered the correct answer but he had lost the negotiation with respect to the closing of the Lithuanian schools. The British Minister, Mr. Chamberlain, had been disgusted with the violent Pole and almost directly afterward told him to go home and stay there. He pointed out that Mr. Zaleski,

* Poland closed approximately 100 Lithuanian Schools in the Vilnius District.

the Foreign Minister, could quite adequately represent Poland at the League's Conference tables.

In the spring of 1928, Mr. Voldemaras made an important visit to London where he was received by the King. He signed the very important trade agreement with England whereby Lithuania was assured a profitable market for her ever increasing amounts of produce. While Voldemaras was abroad, the Lithuanian Constitution was amended as follows:

1. The election of a President should henceforth be accomplished by a special electoral college, similar in purpose to the American institution.
2. The term was to be for seven years.
3. The President was given the power to dissolve the Seimas and, when the Seimas is not in session, to issue the necessary decrees and promulgate laws. The term of the Seimas was raised from three to five years.
4. Voting franchise was granted to persons 24 and over only.
5. Provisions were made for a State Council into which were retired those individuals who had served in the government and could thus continue to advise.

The new Constitution was to be ratified within a period of ten years. It guaranteed freedom of religion to all who lived within the borders of Lithuania. It provided for compulsory education and contained the claim to Vilnius as the capital city of Lithuania. In the minds of its formulators, it embodied all that was good in the first two instruments and added such provisions as were deemed necessary in the light of recent trends.

The program went on with unabated vigor. Lithuania was rebuilding with a vim and all sensed the importance of building well. The lines of communication were becoming ever longer and the service improved. The living standards slowly rose with the peasants enjoying the new pleasures of the radio, improved tools, modernistic furniture, better living conditions, good sanitary protection, etc. The Lithuanian workmen enjoyed the advantage accruing from advanced labor standards and protective measures. Workers' insurance measures were in vogue in Lithuania at an early date.

The voice of the opposition diminished until it was a mere echo. It is true that the government ruled carefully and sternly,

giving little opportunity for the would be rulers to give vent to their feelings either through the press or in the air.

In the month of June, 1929, a young Socialist student attempted to assassinate Prime Minister Voldemaras. The shot struck a young officer, adjutant to Voldemaras, and killed him. The incident unnerved Voldemaras who withdrew more completely into his inner circle of the Vilkai organization. The situation in governmental circles grew more critical with the Ministers frankly apprehensive of the future. The feeling of distrust and insecurity spread. The stage was set for change—and it came. Prime Minister Voldemaras sought to force President Smetona to sign a certain Act, but the latter remained firm. The Cabinet immediately resigned with the exception of the Prime Minister who nevertheless was forced to withdraw. Voldemaras entered the ranks of those in strict opposition to the government.

President Smetona nominated Tubelis as Prime Minister and instructed him to form a new Cabinet immediately. The atmosphere cleared perceptibly. The Cabinet of Mr. Tubelis was the fifteenth in line of succession and proved itself to be well chosen though not entirely representative of all groups within Lithuania. It was strongly Nationalistic in political complexion.

The roster of the Tubelis Cabinet reads as follows:
Prime Minister and Min. of Finance—Juozas Tubelis.
Minister of Foreign Affairs—D. Zaunius
Minister of Agriculture—Jonas Aleksa
Minister of Education—K. Sakenis
Minister of Commerce—V. Vileisis
Minister of National Defense—Col. Giedraitis
Minister of the Interior—Col. Rusteika
Minister of Justice—A. Zilinskas
State Comptroller—Vincas Matulaitis

The firm hand of Mr. Tubelis proved a steadying influence upon the course of events. Confidence spread to industry and progress was soon noted. His program was frankly approved by the multitudes of Lithuanians living on the land (one must remember that something like 80% of all Lithuanians lived on farms).

The Cooperatives waxed ever stronger and their system extended into almost every community. More will be said of the

Cooperatives later. Some credit also attaches to Mrs. Tubelis, who proved an able adviser to her husband. Mr. Bullitt of our American Diplomatic Service stated that he considered her "one of the best informed women in Europe." In the background, we note the amiable priest, Mironas, who exerted some influence upon the government.

Lithuania, during this period, was represented abroad by a very able diplomat. Mr. Zaunius, Foreign Minister of this Cabinet, proved adept in the handling of Lithuania's interests in foreign circles. His advice was heeded by his League colleagues. On one occasion he stated: "I wish to draw the attention of the members of the League, who also are the signatories of the Pact of Paris, to the grave necessity of peace endeavors, not only in the Far East but also here in the West. I propose that the League of Nations, after accepting the proposed recommendations, should not free herself from further intervention in the conflict as she has done in the Vilnius dispute." Had the members of the League been more willing to heed the words of Zaunius and seriously to consider the trend of events during the 30s, the possibility of a second World War would have been more easily discovered.

As was the custom in the land, amnesty was immediately granted certain political prisoners following the installation of the new Cabinet. The gentlemen of the opposition were allowed to pursue their normal occupations without let or hindrance, but received warnings against seeking surreptitiously to seize power. The ban on the Social Democrats was lifted, but the dark days were ahead. The political enemies would be content to agitate from within. The dark gloom of the depression would slowly settle over a money mad world and all markets would feel the impact. With a loss of buying power abroad, the farmers watched an ever growing pile of foodstuffs that couldn't be traded for the necessary finished goods. Prices gradually lowered.

The new elections were held in the summer of 1931. Various municipal and provincial positions were filled and the electoral College was chosen. This electoral group immediately named Antanas Smetona to a new term of seven years.

Strangely enough, Lithuania continued to sing throughout the depression. Having labored hard in the fields and undergone many privations to date, they were happy in their freedom and liberty. They had much to eat, for theirs was a natural storehouse

of food supplies. They enjoyed their social intercourse despite the stories that made the rounds, of diminishing returns for their produce and the lack of confidence in the foreign markets. Children joined in the intricate folk dances.

The government was left to worry about balancing the budget. It did exactly this by pulling in the national belt and exercising extreme care on the buying proclivities of the people. In fact, the government quite openly stated that it desired to educate the people in the ways of buying as well as selling. It sought to educate them in the utilization of all natural foods and resources.

The figures of the 1929 export trade showed Lithuania sending abroad such produce as meat products, butter, bristles, horse-hairs, seeds, celluloids, amber, eggs, paper products, nails, fruits, berries, mushrooms and the like. The following countries accepted the export articles and produce: Germany 58 per cent; Great Britain 19 per cent; Latvia 10 per cent; Holland 2.6 per cent; the USSR 1.5 per cent. By 1932 the figures were: Great Britain 41 per cent; Germany 39 per cent; Russia 3 per cent; Latvia 2 per cent; Holland 2 per cent; the USA 5 per cent. (All of these figures are from Governmental Statements.)

During the early thirties, Europe was treated to a series of new developments in political experimentation. Notably amongst these were the Nazi and Fascist forms. It is not strange, therefore, that certain Lithuanian leaders fell victim to the organizing germ and sought to bring themselves into power. Voldemaras stood in the near distance to present such ideas to his followers, the army men who were interested in the organization, "The Iron Wolf." A plot was brewed in the "alus" shop and they awaited their opportunity to present various demands.

The opportunity came in the summer of 1934. Rumors had been spread in the Klaipeda district that the Germans received higher wages while enjoying good food and low priced commodities. They blamed the Administration for holding to artificial standards which deprived the workmen of life's necessities. The Germans were not above a little propaganda effort and sent financial aid to keep the pot boiling. Riots were fomented against the hapless Jews and small clubs formed for the ostensible purpose of overthrowing the government.

The Lithuanian government acted promptly. Measures were taken to curb these unlawful activities. Various individuals were

placed in jail or concentration camp. The farmers near the border seem to have been impressed with the agitation and did blame the Tubelis Administration for having bungled the foreign policy with respect to Germany. The greatest blow came, however, when Germany restricted all importation of Lithuanian produce and forbade transshipment over German territory. The depression settled more securely than ever over the Lithuanian nation.

In June, 1934, the Kaunas garrison was called out for night maneuvers. Quick action on the part of the Minister of the Interior countered the move by mobilizing the entire police force. A part of the garrison force aligned themselves against the conspirators, whose leaders then proceeded to President Smetona with certain demands. These were:

1. Prime Minister Tubelis must be dismissed and Voldemaras called to form a new Cabinet.
2. Ministers of the Cabinet must include certain leaders of the opposition.

President Smetona replied that order must first be restored before he could consider the demands of the opposition forces. He did not promise satisfaction.*

Several scores of army officers were speedily dismissed from the army and their ranks, with rights attached, were taken away. General Kubiliunas and two Colonels were tried by a military court and condemned to die for their part in the abortive uprising. This sentence was commuted by President Smetona to long-term imprisonment. Amnesty and reinstatement were later granted to several of the dismissed officers.

Mr. Voldemaras arrived by airplane and awaited the summons to reoccupy the post of Prime Minister. He was arrested and tried for conspiracy. His sentence amounted to 12 years imprisonment. During this period he turned his thoughts to the Roman Catholic Church and turned out a "Life of Christ." In 1938, he received permission to leave Lithuania on his promise to quit the land. He visited in France and later went to Rome. The sequel to

* The President had been informed of the incipient revolt by the Secret Police. He had further been advised by General Kubiliunas that such a move would not be made. Many of the soldiers were misinformed about the whole affair and surprised when fired upon by the police.

his story is that he returned, without permission, during the Russian occupation and was exiled to Russia.

Of interest to the reader is the "Goose Episode" of 1934. As we have mentioned, the Germans cut off importations of Lithuanian products. This move affected the farmers interested in supplying the normal wants of Germans with regard to geese. Huge flocks had been prepared for this market and the government was faced with the dilemma of getting rid of this delicacy. Orders were issued that a part of each government wage would be paid in geese. So much goose was eaten in and about Kaunas, that diplomats inquired whether goose was the piece de resistance before accepting a dinner engagement. (Geese statistics: 1933, 850,000 birds exported; 1934, 161,025; 1935, 88.)

The problems facing the Administration were not easily solved. It was necessary to exercise extreme care in protecting the lit abroad. Various commodities of an essential nature must be procured to supply the demands of an ever growing nation. Coal, oil, iron supplies, etc., must be found abroad—for Lithuania lacked these things. All economy within the country rested upon the farmer and his interests came first. All marketable goods were rushed abroad to fend off the depression evil.

The Constituent Assembly had left one complicated problem unsolved. The forest lands had been created a State Domain. All other lands expropriated should be paid for by government bonds bearing a rate of 3%. Obviously this did not reimburse the land owner in an adequate manner and there was cause for complaint. The foes of the Administration caused many of the farmers to hope for better treatment with a change. Let us consider the measures proposed by Mr. Tubelis to alleviate the situation. The Agrarian Act contained the following provisions:

1. To raise the norm or limit of payments with equal treatment to all.
2. To abolish repayment on market values.
3. To abolish the long term bond payment and assume cash outlays as specified by the Constituent Assembly.
4. To pay with lands from the Public Domain if cash is not available.
5. To make separate agreements with landowners.

Many landowners whose lands had been expropriated, took advantage of this Act thinking it better to have something rather than worthless bonds. The Act created better feeling at home and abroad, for the principle of private ownership appeared now to have been upheld. The Administration also noted that a better class were now attracted to farming as a means of procuring their living since greater security was offered.

The opposition had incited various elements to cause a disturbance alleging they were being robbed of their living. The condition of world depression suggested to these individuals an opportune moment to cause the government embarrassment. They found certain accomplices in those regions where German propaganda quite willingly worked in with their scheme. The Klaipeda region and that portion of Lithuania bordering on Germany contained many Germans who preferred to believe in the vague promises of such leaders as Dr. Neumann and the Rev. Sass. When the Lithuanian government moved against these leaders and brought them to trial, Germany closed her borders and engaged in threatening maneuvers. Terrorists were sent into rural districts to keep farmers from moving their produce to the markets and to bring about a condition of chaos. The government moved swiftly against such subversive activity and soon cleared the roads and countryside of the troublemakers. They also stood firm against German attempts to influence their judgment in the matter of conspiracy against the State. The Christian Democrat and Socialist Populist parties were abolished.

To my way of thinking, the greatest single development during this period was the Cooperative Movement. The Lithuanians had long favored such joint action and even during the trying years of the first Russian Occupation (1795-1915) they had stood together. As early as 1919, the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives discussed ways and means to stimulate better farming methods of producing and selling. They planned for the day when the Cooperatives should enjoy the advantages of joint selling of their produce and the buying of necessary equipment and supplies. The day of independence gave an impetus to the movement and such leaders as Mr. Tubelis proved very valuable. Lecturers were sent into all of the communities urging the farmers to band themselves together. In time, the various smaller units were banded together in the major Cooperatives of Lithuania.

Lietukis is the name of the great Lithuanian Cooperative which was formed to facilitate the marketing of such goods as grain, flax, wood products and the like. They also procured such machinery and supplies as were needed in the growing industries by the farmers. New markets were continually being discovered for the products, and Lietukis sponsored the building of huge granaries for the storing of grains until the ships could be loaded.

Lietukis also carried on a series of experiments which were directly beneficial to the farmer. Correlating their policies with those of the Ministry of Agriculture, they brought to the farmer advanced ideas of breeding, of treatment of grains, and of harvesting. By 1935, Lietukis had about 220 units in their organization and was one of the "big business" interests of Lithuania, yet owned and controlled by the majority for the good of all.

Pienocentras is the term applied to the Lithuanian Cooperative which dealt in dairy products. In 1923, we are told that only three dairy farms existed in the land. Following the declaration of independence and the winning of the war of liberation, the number of dairy farms increased steadily. The establishment of cream stations throughout the country was no mean achievement and greatly increased the buying power of the dairy farmer who thus was enabled to sell his milk. These stations undertook the receiving and grading of eggs for export as well as for domestic markets. Artesian wells were drilled and a high standard of cleanliness was maintained, with the result that Lithuanian Dairy products attained a preferred status. This Cooperative undertook the great work of coordinating the distribution of dairy products throughout Lithuania. It is little wonder that Lithuanian butter, eggs, cheese, and meat products were well received in British and other markets.

Maistas was not primarily a Cooperative, but more properly should be classified as a government project. A large share of the original investment was made by the government so that Lithuanian livestock could be properly butchered and processed for home consumption and for export trade. Lithuanian bacon and hams became a household necessity in English cities and were sold as "Polish Hams" in the U.S.A. This was the case for a short while as the Lithuanian trade mark soon became prominent. By 1939, Maistas exported meat products valued at 71,745,000 lits and this item of food alone should convince everyone that Lithua-

nia most certainly was a very valuable food granary. It is little wonder that such hungry nations as Russia and Germany should covet it. The largest single establishments of Maistas were located at Kaunas, Siauliai, Taurage, and Panevezys.

It is understandable that the large Cooperatives should be in a position to enter other businesses, such as the sugar trade. Lietuvos Cukrus was the name applied to the sugar industry within the country. Machinery was secured in Czechoslovakia and Lithuania became largely self supporting in this necessary commodity.

Since the agricultural cooperatives made such notable gains in serving the people, it is not surprising that this same movement spread into other fields. The Consumers Cooperatives numbered over 650 and used the title Parama. There were Credit Cooperatives as well and the number of these at one time was 600. Considering the 500 units of Pienocentras, the 220 of Lietukis, and the 70 units of the Producer's Cooperative, we get an impression of the network of Cooperative units throughout Lithuania. Since the number was gradually on the increase and the services were being extended, it is safe to estimate that in 1940, there were well over 2,500 in number. They directly served a considerable number of the population of Lithuania.

It is interesting to note that the large cooperatives were equipped to handle the work of feeding the hundreds of thousands of refugees that were thrown upon Lithuania as an outcome of the German and Russian campaigns against Poland. They entered the city of Vilnius to establish modern food supply houses and literally saved the day.

It is useless to deny that these tremendous concerns set up and financed indirectly by a paternalistic government amounted to a monopoly with which private business could not cope. However, the benefits seem to have been so evenly distributed that they can be termed a blessing to the country. It directly enabled Lithuania to quickly take a preferred position in the business circles of the Baltic.

The following list will serve to illustrate the setup:

Organization	1930	1934	1937
Young Farmers' Clubs	10	607	900
Membership	247	16,820	27,000

Pienocentras Societies	205
Membership	12,000
Lietukis Units	108
Membership	20,000

Maistas—membership open to producers, one unit of stock cost 25 lits.

Throughout this story of Cooperative Development we see the hand of the government and much credit is due the work of experts in the department of Agriculture. The educational program was ambitious and achieved notable success. The enthusiasm of the Young Farmers was exceptional and can be compared to the spirit of our 4H Clubs of America. In addition, the government maintained educational institutions, such as the Academy at Dotnuva, the Dairy School at Belvederis, the Forestry School at Alytus, the Geodetic School at Kedainiai, the Zootechnical School at Gruzdizai, and the Bacteriological Institute at Kaunas.

The department of Agriculture also maintained an alert extension service and supplied lecturers who advised on methods of better farming.

Another interesting government virtue was the close attention given to the improvement of health within the nation. Institutions for the care of those infected with pulmonary disorders such as tuberculosis were built in pine forests where patients could find pleasant outdoor rest. Sun baths were prescribed along with the customary full diet treatment. Tuberculotherapy was quite important in Lithuania due to the ravages of the war plus the unhealthy damp climate. The government had just completed in 1940, the million dollar medical clinic at Kaunas. This modern institution was built on a promontory near the Neris river in a most marvelous setting. Equipment was of the latest design. It was planned to fill the great need for better medical facilities.

The government took a keen interest in preventive measures as well. A complete physical education program was in progress. It was especially successful in army circles where instructors put the young men through their paces. Drills and health exercises developed excellent physiques capable not only of resisting the wear and tear of a campaign, but of giving the individual a better chance to succeed in ordinary work.

Americans of Lithuanian extraction were induced by scholarships and stipends to spend a length of time in Lithuania as instructors. Their success in the field of basketball was notable. Natural athletes were these Lithuanian young men and they took to the American game like ducks to water. The Lithuanian basketball teams were finely coordinated outfits and several times managed to win the European Basketball Championship.

While a great deal of attention was given to the proper development of the individual, the main advance was made along lines of mass athletic development. Lithuanians could gather in stadiums to witness hundreds of boys and girls upon a wide field participating in rhythm drills. Bodies showing the graceful contour of healthy development would sweep through synchronized drills that were a delight to the eye. Erect carriage and clear eyes characterized the youthful Lithuanian athlete who thus prepared for life.

The bringing of medical care to the innermost parts of the provinces was the aim of the government's health program.* The Lithuanian government had from the very beginning shown a keen interest in extending the best medical care to all of its citizens. Expectant mothers received special care when unable to meet the regular charges of a physician. Perhaps the greatest drawback was the outmoded system which prevailed in 1919 which expected all sections of society to care for their own members. Thus we see the Hebrews caring for Hebrews, Germans for Germans, etc. It was the intent and purpose of the government to break down such divisions within the country by a common service to all people regardless of creed or race. A careful study of the whole problem was made and feasible improvements were made slowly but surely.

All Lithuanians love to get into the rivers or lakes. Swimming was a popular sport and young and old could be seen wherever there was enough water to make splashing a pleasure. Since the sun shines irregularly in Lithuania and most people desire a plentiful treatment of its violet ray streams when it does shine,

* A sardonic note crept into the brief interim of Lithuania control following the downfall of the regular Smetona government. Paleckis, the erstwhile convict, who was called to fill the post of Lithuanian Prime Minister until the Russians could more completely bind the fetters, announced the appointment of a Minister of Health as if the health of the nation was a new national concern.

bathing in the nude was the natural thing to do. Incidentally, the young Lithuanians show positive evidence of supple, strong, and well developed bodies.

The army training was required of all physically sound young men. They learned valuable lessons of discipline, and showed the good results of the training in their alert carriage, respectful attitude in camp and on leave, and their keen interest in the good things of life. It was a moving sight to see these men march to Church on a Sunday morning, stand respectfully through a service, and apparently enjoy their religion. It was refreshing to see the young soldiers on leave, enjoying a stroll in the woods. Drunkenness and carousing was the exception with these smart young fellows who were being drilled for military service.

Still another phase of health protection can be pointed out and we might correctly term it Social Security. Workers were required to pay 5% of their wage, which sum the employer matched, to a fund which went to defray expenses incurred by sickness or disability. By the end of 1935, some 50,000 persons in Lithuania were thus insured. In the Memel Territory, an additional 29,000 workers were thus covered by Social Security insurance. The move was intended to insure immediate attention to incipient disease and was a form of preventive medicine.

The students in school were benefitting from the enlightened educational policies of the Tubelis government. In August, 1936, the government ruled that a child should not leave school prior to his 16th birthday. Lithuania would need a young and vigorous group of specially trained technicians for the future leadership of the nation.

From 1930 until 1937, the vigorous advance of Lithuania was made. Dark clouds of trouble were discernible on the horizon, but Lithuanian leaders appeared resolute and unafraid. They had built well and they placed their faith upon principles of right and justice.

Lithuania regarded her military program with an anxious eye. She found it increasingly difficult to obtain certain materials for war. She wanted anti-aircraft units, but Great Britain and France could not supply for they were desperately re-arming to match the might of Germany. Her military procurement office was looking to all ready markets where might be obtained some mechanized

equipment and ordnance. With a balanced budget ideal, she carefully watched her military buying. I mention these things to illustrate the phase of Lithuanian life that is not generally considered. In the training of her youth, this little country had made an enviable record. Her army was young and tough. Soldiers were disciplined and trained in trades. They were prepared to fight a defensive war against any enemy that might march against Lithuania.

Let us briefly consider some aspects of German preparation before 1939. They had over forty yacht clubs with more than four thousand power craft. Most of these pleasure boats could, if necessary, transport more than 100 fully equipped soldiers apiece. They continually practiced the art of embarkation and disembarkation. Why?

In addition vast preparations were being made for Germany's needs of the air. The large Tempelhof field in Berlin witnessed the constant arrival and departure of transport planes. Mail was carried. Passengers found a tempting schedule of flights. Young pilots were constantly coming and going in the complicated courses of training. It was such a vast picture of air preparedness that Lindbergh and others remarked about the efficiency of the German air arm.

Other German youth found enjoyment in the glider service. It was considered a high mark of distinction to be classed as a glider pilot. Thousands of youth seemed most interested in this unique sport and seasoned observers remarked: "It looks as if the high command is seriously considering the use of gliders in an invasion move, if it should become necessary."

German boys and girls were sent on every sort of health excursion. "Strength through Joy" movements became a by-word. Canoes could be seen upon all rivers. Hiking and mountain climbing were encouraged. The good effects became increasingly more noticeable. The German youth abstained from smoking and drinking. His carriage was erect and there was a strange glitter of determined hardness in his eyes. Training began at a tender age.

Labor battalions moved about with an emphasis upon precision. Marching clubs were popular. Hitler youth evidenced the seriousness with which the German people were accepting

the challenge they heard on the radio, in the press and on the street. Yes, Germany was girding herself for a long and sustained war.

She was preparing to take on all enemies who preferred to deny her a voice. Specialists were trained for various outpost assignments. A high ranking German official told me that in this war, Germany would use every means of propaganda that she had failed to consider important during the first World War. One such preparation concerns the corps of agents in foreign lands. Trained to augment from the inside of a country, the attacking force from without, these agents were to play an important part in the various campaigns against nations in order.

Colonists were also being trained to take their places in the colonies Germany was so confident she would retake. Of these colonists, we read in the "Schwartz Corps," official organ of the Hitler S. S. organization: "We need colonies to assure a living for the millions of German workers and not as a supplementary territory where the worker might live. The work done in the Colonies must aim at attaining the greatest advantages for the Fatherland with the least possible expenditure of man power. No German farmer, craftsman or colonist will be sent to the Colonies, only German administrators who will act as organizers of agriculture, industry, mining, transport, forestry and commerce, serving as the Fatherland's delegates and symbolizing the Reich sovereignty.

"It must be emphasized that the purpose of the Colonies will be to supply the Reich with cheap raw materials. In Africa, only natives can produce cheaply. German colonial administrators will therefore organize native production, so far as possible, raising it to higher levels through efficient German instruction. This will not require large numbers of German colonists.

"Anyone with colonizing or pioneering instincts and faculties will find ample scope at home in laying the foundation of an improved new peasant stock and need not allow his thoughts to sweep so far afield. Romantic dreams and yearnings can be satisfied in the Reich's newly-won European territories." (Report made in November, 1940).

To continue the story of preparedness, we see that while Germany had 40 stations, operating on 31 wavelengths, Great Britain

had only 16 stations operating on 12 wavelengths. Germany had 10 high powered broadcasters to England's 2. When war broke out, England scuttled 10 of her wavelengths while Germany maintained her regular schedules. To add to the advantages in the ether waves, Germany acquired 28 stations while overrunning Poland, Norway and Denmark. She acquired 44 more stations when her troops scampered easily over Holland, Belgium and France.

Italy maintained some 50 stations with wavelengths of 20 varieties. When one considers that the Italian voice is largely German directed, it is easy to see the vast advantage in propaganda that Germany enjoyed. To add to this advantage is the consideration that her central position on the European continent gives her a greater efficiency coverage in comparison with that of England who has a radiation of 180 degrees falling into the Atlantic or Ireland.

Lithuania was literally swamped with German air propaganda. Programs emanated from the sending stations of the Reich and most Lithuanians understood German. No one missed the implications.

For the Memellander, the German broadcasts were essential bits of diet. The Lithuanian listened very closely to the accumulative reports of German successes. Some have termed the radio broadcasts as maneuvers in the war of nerves. Suffice it to say that such maneuvering was highly successful. The Lithuanian was impressed but said very little. His taciturnity was most pronounced when considering the Memel problem.

The Russian story is similar to that of Germany in that an intense activity could be noted. Russia was known to have a plentiful supply of soldiers who were fairly well armed. Those who sympathized with her aims were not so confident about her ability when pitted against such a power as Germany and took refuge in the thought that Russia had never lost a defensive war. It is highly probable that her greatest strength lies in the free use of her great iron reserves of the Ural mountains and in industries set well within her mighty borders.

Her oil resources are not entirely gauged, but at present the Baku region supplies the much needed fuel for her extensive mechanization.

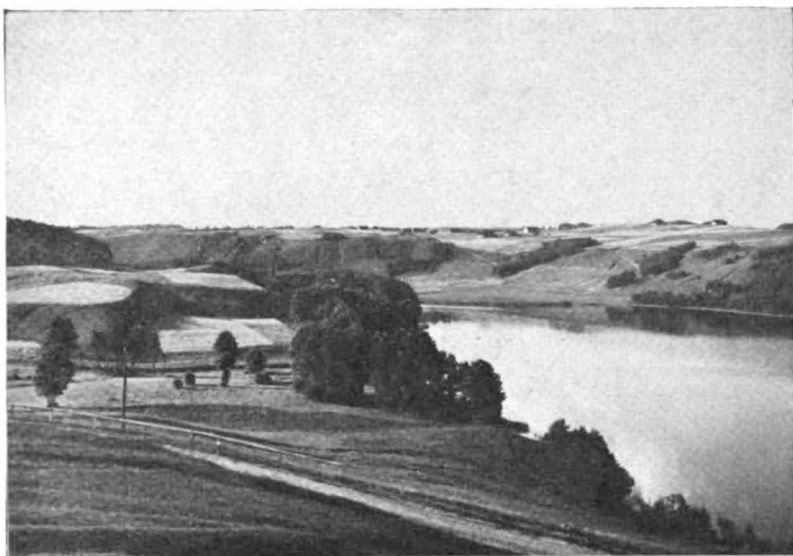
In the year 1937, both the Memel and Vilnius problems were proving exceedingly irksome to the Lithuanian government. There appeared to be very little she could do about stopping the series of Vilnius border incidents since Poland was obviously seeking to precipitate some incident which would bring about the opening of the regular channels of intercourse between the two nations. There were continued rumblings of the Pilsudski variety, but they were given with the suavity of a vacillating Beck who wasn't quite sure which way to jump.

The Nazi party within the Memel Territory seemed intent on careful boring from within and the Lithuanians seemed content to follow a program of watchful waiting and hopeful consideration. It was quite apparent that Germany did not press any advantage in the Memel situation simply because her attention was directed elsewhere. She planned to care for the faithful Memellander when it pleased her purpose and when it fitted into her larger plan for conquest in Eastern Europe. The dealings with Russia made the need seem momentarily less pressing.

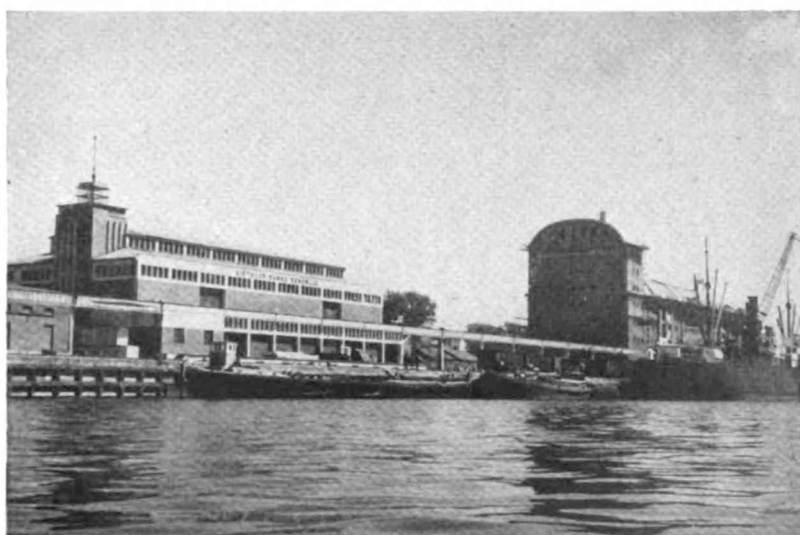
The attention of Germany was focused, in the fall of 1937, upon little Czechoslovakia and the story of how she brought about the solution to this problem is already a matter of history. The irredentist movement of the Sudeten Germans with the subsequent Munich Conference and "sale down the river" of the brave and resistant Czechs began the landslide that threatened to engulf all democracies. The Germans had very wisely concluded that this country must first be out of the way if she was to force the encirclement issue. But the first step should be the little German Country of Austria.

Though Vienna had a large majority of Jews and others who certainly were not German, the majority of the peasants were of the Bavarian strain of Austrian. March of 1938 saw the Anschluss. People laughed when they read the reports of just how the Germans occupied the little country. It was reported that many tanks and trucks had to be left alongside the highway because of faulty lubrication. There were no end to reports purporting to show forth the weakness of the German machine that accomplished this advance.

Lithuania looked very carefully at Germany for the indications that she might soon move in her direction. Everything pos-



The Rolling Hills and Nemunas Basin, —
 "Silently, Silently the Nemunas flows"



New warehouse built on the shore of Klaipeda harbor
 by Lithuania.



The Ancient Forest and Modern Lithuanian bridge and roadway over Nemunas near Alytus.

sible was done to make for good relations. Though resentful of the German treatment in 1934, Lithuania carefully utilized the time in 1936 to formulate a new Trade Agreement. It was duly signed on August 5th of that year. The attacks of the German press in January, 1937, wherein Lithuania was accused of pro-Russian leanings, had a good effect for it stalled the Bolshevik advance for the time being. Germany was aware that Russian engineers were building an underground airdrome near Siauliai, supplying arms to Lithuania.

There was a recurrence of the German protests in the fall of 1937. This time, the Germans confined themselves to protests about the Memel situation. It soon blew over since Germany was interested with bigger problems and considered it possible that the Memel situation would take care of itself in time. It is not unlikely that the Germans planned, at this time, to include the Memel situation with the Polish problem child of Danzig.

The Polish Ultimatum of March, 1938.

The Vilnius problem seemed far more imminent. During 1937, there had been various incidents along the border. Poachers, border runners, and outlaws roamed back and forth across the line drawing occasional fire from both Lithuanian and Polish guards. The most serious complaint registered by the Lithuanians was the provocative movement of border posts. It appears from certain accounts, that a Lithuanian farmer would erect a haystack on his farm in Lithuania during the course of one or two days only to find that the haystack had somehow moved into the official confines of Poland overnight.

If the Poles could move the border markers, the Lithuanians could rectify the error. Thus it went, on and on, with feelings growing ever more taut and shooting scrapes more frequent.

For a long time, Poland had considered the situation on her Lithuanian border as unsatisfactory. She had put forth several feelers without success. It was not surprising therefore, that she chose to make the most of a certain incident which took place on a hazy morning of March, 1938.

According to the reports covering the incident, a Lithuanian border guard had been making his rounds when he came upon a group of individuals running towards the line. He called for

them to halt, an order with which they did not choose to comply. He fired and, in the hazy morning, displayed a remarkably accurate aim. The bullet had found its way into the vitals of a Polish border guard who promptly expired on Lithuanian soil. The Lithuanian government was quick to express its sorrow over the untoward happening and to extend its sympathy to the family of the deceased. A rather sullen attitude was exhibited by the Poles who came to Lithuania for the body. Not a word of comment did they have to offer.

It became evident that Poland was choosing to regard the incident as a long looked for provocation. In Warsaw, the government expressed its grave concern over the poor relations with Lithuania which were rapidly deteriorating. Mr. Beck was not present at the hastily convened Cabinet meeting and did not know of the "leaking of inflammatory information" which resulted in Poles parading before public buildings calling for the blood revenge. Shouts of "On to Kowno" were heard. The Polish jingoists were united in a determination to march against an "aggressive" Lithuania. Could they not achieve a victory? Were they not 30,000,000 people against a paltry 2,500,000? Why wait?

Mr. Beck hurriedly returned to Warsaw and admonished a careful procedure, for Germany would most surely move to protect the Memelland. Poland might precipitate a direct attack from Germany by this unwarranted attack on Lithuania. Mr. Beck advised a rather painless request that relations between the two countries be immediately regularized. This request was issued in the form of an ultimatum through the good offices of the Estonian Legations in Tallinn.

Following the incident on the dim and misty morning of March 11, 1938, Lithuania had called all available men to the colors and prepared herself for military resistance. She did not entertain any hope that alone she could cope with the Polish armies. She was resolved, however, to face the crisis with courageous heart and lose a war, if need be, without loss of honor. Lithuania had consulted both Germany and Russia but could find nothing that would cause her to "prefer" at this time, a war with Poland. The ultimatum had, incidentally, specified that no other nation be approached in the matter.

On March 19, 1938, near the close of the specified 48 hours, the Lithuanian Seimas was notified of the fact that the Lith-

uanian government had accepted the Polish terms and would proceed immediately to normalize all relations. The government leaders fully intended, at this time, to put every known barrier into a speedy normalization but the Poles followed up their initial advantage.

The "On to Kowno"* had been accomplished by the ultimatum type of diplomacy that elsewhere worked such seeming wonders for the nervous Third Reich. Once in Kaunas, the Poles set up their Legation and spoke in glowing terms of possible trade and commerce. Eventually, they raised the Polish flag high above one of the finer villas topping the Kaunas heights. Only one matter seemed to irk them and that was the retention in the Lithuanian Constitution of the stipulation that Vilnius remained the capital city of Lithuania. On this point, Lithuania never gave in.

Practically everyone in Lithuania was aware of the fact that Europe was tottering on the brink of ruin. The swift march of the German panzer divisions into the helpless little country of Austria was a sign that could not be disregarded. Diplomats spoke of this move as one would refer to a checking move in chess. It appeared to be the first step of German encirclement of Czechoslovakia. The stout Czechs had mobilized their forces by May 21, 1938 and were sounding out the good intentions of their Allies. They realized that only Russia was disposed to engage the Germans in open combat and the Russians preferred to wait for the initial move on the part of Great Britain and France.

German minority groups were everywhere voicing their discontent and not the least vocal were the Sudeten Deutsch of Czechoslovakia. During June, the Germans and Czechs engaged in a series of discussions relative to this problem. In Lithuania, the Memellander was quite open in his disapproval of the Lithuanian government and preferred to swagger a bit in anticipation of a quick return to the Reich. Dr. Neumann and Mr. Bertuleit were leaders of the dissenters. They had been chief actors in the Conspiracy Trials of December, 1934. (See Memel Problem).

The little nation was strangely apathetic to the dangers surrounding her. She still believed in Collective Security but now applied it only to the Baltic States. She desperately clung to the

* Kowno is the Polish for Kaunas.

hope that somehow her absolute neutrality would save her. At the same time, she shopped in the various military markets and brought her armaments up to date as far as it was possible to do so. She became almost fatalistic. Full cooperation with Estonia and Latvia could not be enjoyed as long as the one remaining problem, namely Memel, still remained unsolved and Lithuania was loath to lose her only seaport.

On September 5, 1938, the raucous voice of Herr Hitler, the German Fuehrer, addressed the Nuremberg Conference. Slightly veiled warnings were sent out for all interested parties to take heed. Lithuanians heard the message and feared that soon their Memelland must be returned to avert a more serious lopping by the Germany now grown strong.

Lithuania had builded well. Her financial position was strong. Her trade had been increased to good proportions and prices were good. She sent her bacon, eggs, poultry, meat products, flax, linseed, grain, etc. to Great Britain, Germany, Russia, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, and other nations. In turn, she purchased metals, chemicals, fertilizers, coal, cement, lime, glassware, oil products, cloth and textiles, tobacco, salt, machinery, etc. from Great Britain, Germany, Russia, Belgium, Holland, Czechoslovakia, etc. (countries are arranged in order of importance to Lithuania.)

The Lithuanian nation was treated to its new Constitution on May 12, 1938. The authoritarian government had promised as much when it assumed control ten years before. The document had been prepared for the Fifth Seimas. In essence the effort was well meant, for the Lithuanian Administration wished to place an instrument before the people which would best serve their needs in the light of their political age. It has been mentioned that such countries as Czechoslovakia and Switzerland had already assumed a national status which allowed full democracy but that other countries, southeastern Europe for instance, were still groping for the form which would best suit their ends and which necessarily was favorable to a strong central government. The ten years of experimentation in Lithuania had caused the Constitution Scholars to recommend strong powers to the President and yet retain such deliberative bodies as the Seimas and the State Council. In brief the new Constitution provided the following interesting features:

The President of the Republic shall be elected for a term of seven years instead of three. (Art. 62). He was to be elected by an electorate chosen from assigned provinces and not by the Seimas as formerly. (Art. 63) The President appoints and dismisses the Prime Minister and State Comptroller solely by his signature. He may give consent to court proceedings against these individuals for disciplinary transgressions. (Art. 74) In the absence of a Seimas, the President may enact laws which, when the Seimas reconvenes shall be ratified or annulled. (Art. 110) It was further stipulated that the President could dissolve the Seimas before its term of five years had expired. Their lack of confidence in him could be expressed by a majority of the qualified membership— (3/5 majority).

The National Council according to Art. 104, was formed to formulate new projects and to codify the existing laws. To this Council went various leaders who had merited such favor by their service to the nation. For instance, it was customary for a deposed Minister to be placed in this Council.

It was noted that the traditional claim to the city of Vilnius as the capital city of the country was included in the new Constitution. (Art. 6) The 1938 Constitution contained a series of Articles which describe the ideal State. Art. 44-47 describe the guarantees to labor. Art. 48-56 deal with public enterprise. Articles 57-60 deal with the health of the nation and social security.

The Constitution could be amended by a 3/5 majority vote of the Seimas according to Articles 153-154. Thus was guaranteed to the nation the right to amend their Constitution if the need was felt.

The government deliberated upon the instrument in the fall of 1937 and into the spring of 1938. Mr. Tubelis took a leading role in the drafting and adopting of this noteworthy document. Though suffering from impaired health, this great Lithuanian leader never spared himself. On the advice of his physician, he resigned his post in March, 1938 to take a rest cure abroad. Father Mironas was chosen to fill his position of Prime Minister and Tubelis was named Minister of Agriculture with permission to go abroad "on leave."

When the Constitution of 1938 was promulgated on May 12, 1938, Father Mironas placed his signature beside that of President Smetona.

Before leaving the period immediately before and including the spring of 1938, we should recount briefly some of the accomplishments of the government in which the hand of Mr. Tubelis is noticeable. During his regime of seven and one half years, he built up confidence abroad and inaugurated many new projects at home. Lithuanians had good cause to feel confident in his leadership for he typified conservatism. His policy was one of "pay as you go."

Various economic and financial enterprises, share companies and cooperative societies were founded by his efforts and enjoyed the support of the National Treasury. Towns and counties were encouraged to build schools and hospitals, lay out and build new roads, repair old roads, erect bridges and public buildings, and to further the work of raising the national culture to high levels. Notable achievements were the main bridges, the improvement of the harbor of Klaipeda, the building of the Telšiai-Kretinga railways, the Kaunas-Raseiniai arterial highway, a network of new schools, the new University buildings in Kaunas, the Museum building, the Labor Building, the Kaunas Clinic Hospital (1000 beds) and many other public works. These notable achievements were accomplished by the National Government acting largely by the inspiring advice and leadership of Prime Minister Tubelis.

He also exerted a good influence in formulating and passing the 1928 Constitution, The Act of Municipalities and County Governments, The Act establishing new Courts of Law, The Election Law concerning membership in the Seimas, and many Treaties with Foreign Countries.

Possessing a practical turn of mind, Tubelis gave his firm support to every measure calculated to make Lithuania more self supporting. Swamplands were drained, peat lands were utilized, and encouragement given to all industries.

After serving for some months in the Mironas Cabinet as Minister of Agriculture, he was appointed Chief Director of the Bank of Lithuania. He died in the autumn of 1939.

The difference between the former Prime Minister and Father Mironas was quite marked. Mironas had often appeared in the background as an advisor to the government. He had long been a Lithuanian patriot and had known danger and privation in

serving her best interests. He had distributed Lithuanian literature at the time when such procedure was dealt with by the Russian overlords as a most serious crime. He had worked diligently in his parish at Vilnius and in the surrounding country for a recognition of Lithuanian churches. He had signed the 1918 Declaration of Independence. He had served a term in the Seimas of 1926. He had received an appointment as Chief Army Chaplain during these years, which position he held for a long term. He had come forward during the critical days of the Polish ultimatum of 1938 to serve as Prime Minister even though he confessed to an inability of capably serving in that capacity. His Cabinet was the last of the line which were definitely Nationalistic in makeup.

The new Lithuanian Chamber of Commerce building at Kaunas was opened in this year. Mr. Kurkauskas, the President of the Trade and Commerce group, gave an eloquent picture of Lithuanian industry. He pointed out that the industrial life of the nation had been expanded about 170%. He stated that by 1938, thirty thousand laborers worked in some 1250 varied industries. Greatest of all were the Cooperatives which truly showed a remarkable record of achievement. There is no doubt that these Cooperative endeavors stand forth as a remarkable achievement of a paternalistic government which had the best interest of the people at heart.

Klaipeda (Memel) Seized By Germany.

The rumble of tanks and the roar of practicing guns could be heard by Lithuania. She was keenly aware of the Martian volcano that threatened to erupt at any moment. It is rather difficult to follow the whole series of so called crises for each day brought new difficulties. In Lithuania, one could hear the tramp, tramp, tramp of the young Lithuanian soldiers. Her army looked smart and her equipment was fairly good. Only one factor worked against her on every hand. Her potential enemies carried the ratio of fire power that made resistance almost suicidal. Her warlike preparations could have only one meaning: defense.

The Memel problem grew more trying as the days passed. After a visit to the city of Rome in Feb. 1939, the Lithuanian Foreign Minister, Mr. Urbsys, called at the Wilhelmstrasse to speak with Herr Von Ribbentrop. They spoke of the Memelland and of Lithuania's duty to these people. It was at once apparent that

Germany wished the return of all former parts of the German Reich and the correct treatment of all German minorities. It was also apparent that she fully intended to cause such a return and treatment by the use of threats and force, if necessary. Mr. Urbys hurried to Kaunas. After Munich, the stock of Germany had risen to a new high and the bold march into Bohemia and Moravia left everyone expectant of further trouble.

The Lithuanian Cabinet met in secret session. Members of the Seimas and the State Council were consulted in the matter. Lithuania appealed to England and France. These governments advised her that no help could be given in the matter. The terms offered by Germany were considered favorable "under the circumstances." Lithuania would restore Memel to Germany. On her part, Germany agreed to reimburse Lithuania for all investments made within the Territory (1923-1939). She further agreed to give Lithuania a lease of 99 years for a portion of the Memel Harbor. These promises were never kept. Though loath to give up her much needed outlet to the Sea, Lithuania preferred to avoid open conflict with a Germany on the march. It was, for them, a matter of saving what they could. On March 21, 1939, Lithuania ceded the Territory to Germany. The occupation of the region was so rapid, that many people, especially Jews, found it inconvenient to move their property. The exodus in some respects approximated a rout. A refugee emergency was created and the Lithuanians were forced to undertake a work of rehabilitation.

Herr Hitler wished to make a triumphal entry into the Territory but the Baltic Sea didn't cooperate. The German Fuehrer arrived in a large man-of-war (the Deutschland) with a draught too great for the shallow harbor. It was necessary to come ashore in a small Captain's barge and Hitler's morning eggs were thoroughly bashed about. He looked green about the gills as he rode "in triumph" through the streets of Memel. He left the Territory almost immediately.

The agreement read in the following manner: 1) The Lithuanian government shall immediately arrange for the complete transfer of the Territory to the Reich. 2) The German Reich will guarantee the borders of Lithuania. 3) Lithuania shall receive terms relative to the leasing of the port facilities for a period of 99 years, as well as certain financial compensation for the improvements and buildings made during the period from 1923-1939.

Calling upon their wildest trader, Mr. Norkaitis, the Lithuanians planned to take full advantage of this untimely forced agreement. Mr. Jankauskas, Secretary General of the Ministry for Communications, prepared the necessary protocol for negotiations concerning the harbor, financial, and economic problems arising from the transfer.

It has been indicated in the foregoing that the Mironas Cabinet could not long endure. The opposition was growing more vocal with the turn of events and the President was inclined to hearken to their voice following the Memel crisis. The mantle of Prime Minister was placed upon the young shoulders of a mild mannered Army General. General Cernius had followed a consistent career in the Army and could not be accused of openly favoring any party. He lacked experience and was without the political backing. His biggest asset was a pleasant personality and the traditional Lithuanian patience. He was given an opportunity to head a Coalition Cabinet which included the following men:

Prime Minister—General Cernius (non-party)
Vice Prime Minister—K. Bizauskas (Christian Democrat)
Min. of the Interior—General Skucas (non party)
Min. of Defense—General Musteikis (non party)
Min. of Finance—General Sutkus (Nationalist)
Min. of Agriculture—Dr. Kriksciunas (Soc. Pop.)
Min. of Communications—Germanas (Nationalist)
Min. of Education—Dr. Bistras (Chr. Democrat)
Min. of Justice—Dr. Tamosaitis (Soc. Pop.)
Min. of Foreign Affairs—Urbsys (non party)

This Cabinet has been nicknamed the "General" Cabinet since there were so many high ranking army men on its roster. The Cabinet was short lived for the reason it lacked the power to formulate strong policies in the face of the dangerous foreign situation.

Lithuania, at all times, conducted herself as a strictly Christian nation, willing to share her food with the distressed, willing to provide rest and medical attention to those unfortunates who were driven from their old homes by the movement of aggressive forces and willing to consider all pleas for peace. Her government listened very closely to the warnings emanating from Washington

and she pinned her hopes on the eventual victory of democratic forces over the might of dictator nations.

Various refugees were camped about the region adjacent to the Memelland. Many had been forced to flee when the German Administration announced that all Jews must be clear of the Memel Territory within 14 days. Many of these Jews had never lived in Lithuania before the Memel Territory was obtained in 1923. All sought desperately to take their precious belongings with them and busses, taxis, farmers' carts and anything with wheels had been utilized to carry them over the border. It created an immediate feeding problem for the new government. It also created a serious rehabilitation problem.

Not all of these Jews were wealthy. Many were diseased or in poor health. All needed food, clothing and medical attention. The government tackled the problem with a vigor that was commendable and was aided by the Joint Distribution Committee, an organization of New York, for Jewish Relief. This organization continued to do a very fine piece of work in Lithuania on into 1940.

The summer of 1939 passed with a tense feeling developing in Europe. Preparations for war proceeded at a tremendous rate. Hitler had warned Poland in unmistakable terms that the Danzig Problem must be solved. Great Britain had countered with a firm pledge to rush to the side of Poland if she were attacked. The stage was set. The Romans broke the Easter Peace by invading the peaceful little country of Albania. On April 16, 1939, the President of the United States sought to avert open warfare by asking Hitler for a Ten Year Guarantee of Boundaries. There was no response. Halifax returned to London to write his "Failure of a Mission." Such was the auspicious opening of spring 1939. It was no longer a question of whether open warfare would break out but rather a question of just when it would begin.

An ominous warning came from Russia. Mr. Litvinov was dismissed and this could mean that Stalin had cleared a Jew from the pathway of negotiations with Germany. This happened on May 3rd and the British countered with new diplomatic activity in Moscow. Germany and Italy had drawn the Axis ties very close on May 7th. By May 31st, Molotov was reasonably sure of just how Russia would play its cards and gave a slight indication of it to the press.

A new technique had entered the war preparations. It was the undeclared war of nerves. Opposing countries would render the air rather silly with threats, cajolery, misleading information, false news reports, silly summaries and commentaries, interminable speeches and recounts of encirclement, appeasement, "Drang Nach Osten," etc. To the listener, it was amusing but quite confusing.

Lithuania was quite hopeful that the Poles would follow her example and peacefully settle their differences with the Germans. On the other hand, they very realistically observed that the Poles gave no indication of accepting any German directed "solution" to the problem. During July and August, the war of nerves took a new turn. Men were marching. Cannons were being fired near the border. Tanks were rumbling. The British were encouraging and the Poles were waiting.

On August 21, the Russian-German Pact was announced in dramatic fashion. To many circles, it was a complete reversal on the part of Herr Hitler and no explanation was offered other than that of expediency. The Lithuanians were inclined to hail the move with rejoicing since it presumably set ahead the day of conflict between the two behemoths. However, the Polish-German difficulties made them apprehensive of their safety.

In the grim, gray beginnings of September 1, 1939, the German planes were hauled forth from their coverings of leaves and boughs to tune up for the memorable first flights over Poland. In a short time, they were ready to roar forth with their death dealing missiles. Tanks were ready for the big push. Soldiers were massed to follow up the panzer outfits that should clear a pathway. It was to be a spectacle of German military skill. All details of modern warfare had been properly attended. The Poles awaited the shock.

The story of the Polish campaign is interesting. It is a tale of Polish heroism in the face of too many planes, cannons and panzer units. It is also a tale of quick hitting at vital Polish nerve centers and quick ruin of ammunition dumps, airfields, and railroad centers. The war was over within the month.

The advance of the Russians against the Polish rear was a surprise to most everyone including the Germans. Russia had been promised something quite definite by the Germans when

they signed the Pact in August, but apparently, the Russians did not trust their German Allies and decided to do a bit of aggression on their own. Von Ribbentrop made a hasty trip to Moscow during September and arranged certain details which were finally ironed out completely with the talks of October.

Lithuania had been carefully watching her borders but, nonetheless, thousands managed to make their way into the land. It was variously estimated by government authorities and relief workers that the number of refugees was from 5,000 to 10,000. In the third week of the war, an entire Polish division crossed the Lithuanian border and was interned. Perhaps the most accurate total figure of refugees within Lithuania on September 30th, 1939, was 20,000 men, women and children. Of this number, about 15,000 were quite definitely accounted for by the Lithuanian Red Cross, the organization charged with the relief work.

Russia had moved upon Poland only when she knew that all resistance was knocked out of the Poles. Her forces met the German divisions on a line that ran generally east of Warsaw to the Carpathian mountains near Lwow.

It was during the negotiations between Russia and the Baltic States, that Lithuanian envoys discovered the resignation by Germany of all claims to "influence" north of East Prussia. This definitely left Lithuania within the Russian orbit and hastened Lithuania's acceptance of the Russian terms which were announced on October 10th: the outright return of a portion of the Vilnius Territory originally ceded (July 12, 1920) to Lithuania by the Russian government. Lithuania would allow Russia to station four garrisons at advantageous points, east of Kaunas and by Vilnius, as a mutual protection measure. (It was a tactical error to accede.)

The return of the Vilnius Territory was received with mixed emotions. The circumstances of its return had left the Lithuanians quite sober. The city of Vilnius, with its 200,000 now swollen to perhaps 250,000, presented a tremendous challenge. For the most part, the inhabitants were Polish or Jewish. There were "precious few" Lithuanians left within the city although many of the farmers living nearby were of Lithuanian descent. Many of the Polish residents in Vilnius were originally from other parts of Poland and had moved to Vilnius to fill governmental positions with the railroad, department of agriculture, customs service and other lines

of work. Obviously these people could not return to their original homes and obviously they resented the fact that Lithuania had accepted the "gift of the Vilnius Territory." However, the Lithuanians preferred to minister to their wants of wood and clothing, of medical supplies and care.

Confidence gradually returned and a degree of normalcy was obtained. The presence of Russian troops within the Lithuanian borders rendered a discordant note, since fraternizing between Russians and Lithuanians was not allowed. The great numbers of Poles within the territory also raised grievous problems. Disgruntled Polish elements proved dangerous, and stringent methods of police control were found necessary. There was an ominous note in the atmosphere.

The tightening of war's restrictions soon became felt in Lithuania. Rationing was tried. A need grew for such imports as herring, salt, sugar, pepper, coffee, cocoa, tapioca, rice, fruits, etc. in addition to oil and commercial raw stuffs. Movements of boats on the Baltic were uncertain. Exports fell off and certain commodities as butter, bacon, eggs, meat products, etc. began piling up in warehouses. Just how to get these materials to England was becoming a difficult question. Some supplies were obtained from Germany and Russia. Lithuanian officials and economists struggled manfully with each new problem.

During the fall of 1939, through winter, and into the spring of 1940 the relief work went on unabated. Various individuals had entered the Vilnius Territory or Lithuania proper who needed attention. All were cared for in the best possible manner.

A special Polish Relief Committee had been set up in Vilnius directly after Poland was invaded. It functioned on small funds received from Polish sources. When the Russians arrived in September they impounded all funds, but a Polish woman doctor who was active in this relief work succeeded in getting several thousand zloties released. They maintained as many relief stations as possible. Their feeding problem was surmounted by the energy and zeal that is only born of human devotion next to saintliness. This committee weathered the Russian occupation and carried on after the territory was returned to Lithuania. The Lithuanian Red Cross preferred to work directly with this original committee after taking over.

Only one relief organization carried on quite separately. This work was for those Polish men and women who preferred to use their own means to live. They pooled their resources and purchased necessary supplies. Living in communistic fashion in the old Jesuit monastery they followed the counsel of Father Kuharski in excellent fashion and preserved their self respect. They had a store which brought in a meager supply of money. Gems, silver objects, art works, tapestries, and the like were offered for sale. This particular piece of relief work was not considered "of the best" by Lithuanian authorities.

Lithuanian and Polish doctors labored for long hours in the various hospitals. They took every possible precaution against the breaking out of an epidemic. Children received special attention. The wounded soldiers and civilians were treated with medical supplies on hand though a serious need for replenishments was soon encountered.

The Lithuanian visitor to Vilnius invariably found his or her way to the Cathedral. Here lay the body of Vytautas. Gediminas is buried in a nearby Vilnius hill according to tradition, and here began the Lithuanian Catholic religion. It is a sad commentary that severe religious dissension broke out between the Polish and Lithuanian Catholics. According to Rome, this time honored Lithuanian capital was recognized as a Polish diocese. A Polish Archbishop still remained and forbade the use of the Lithuanian language at mass. The Lithuanian students migrated to Vilnius in large numbers after the University was formally opened under Lithuanian control and sought to worship at the Cathedral and other Catholic churches. They felt very patriotic and asked for sermons in Lithuanian. When this was denied, they resorted to disturbances within the church, breaking out in patriotic song when the sermon was delivered in Polish.

The events of 1939 caused restrictions to be placed upon certain materials such as oil, gasoline, coal, coke, and some food-stuffs. The Lithuanian price regulator worked diligently at his post and managed to keep an even keel to the price structure. Notwithstanding his efforts, certain prices were forced upwards because of scarcity. Government leaders anxiously watched for news concerning their steamships, laden with necessary supplies for their industry and life. Spices were scarce. Yarn and thread were difficult to obtain. Oil was needed. Orders for salt

and coal had received attention in Russia with promises of quick delivery.

I have mentioned but a few of the matters that concerned the Lithuanian economists. They will serve to illustrate the disruption that war brings in its wake. All national life was affected by the mechanics of armed conflict.

In the fall of 1939, Russia had fired upon little Finland. The Bolshevik forces had been greeted by such salvos that they found themselves actually beaten on the field of battle.

The Mannerheim Line proved to be too strongly built for the poorly constructed Russian tanks and great was the slaughter of the invaders. All through the winter, they kept at their futile pounding. Their only success was in the bombing of defenseless cities with homes and Lutheran churches, and in the killing of women and children. Russia's huge air armada met practically no opposition and roared day after day over their objectives to plant the Molotov Breadbaskets of hate. Still the Finns held grimly to their lines. Their occasional sorties brought new reports of huge Russian losses. The Russians were being licked by superior fighters.

In the spring Stalin tired of the warfare which had turned the whole world against Russia, and appealed to his friend Adolph Hitler. He wanted a contingent of officers to lead the Russians through the Finnish line. Though some 100-150 German Officers committed suicide rather than serve with the Bolsheviks,* enough German officers arrived to make the new assaults successful. The Germans demanded, in exchange for this service which was calculated to build up the battered Russian prestige and clear the spring air for possible German drives in the west, the sparing of Finland from absorption by Russia. A peculiar peace ensued in which the Russians received only a part of the strategic peninsula with Viipuri, a slice of northern territory, and concession for railway services in the north, plus a small island fortification called Hango. Here again, the Lithuanians observed all developments with uneasiness.

It was hard for some of the devout Catholics to understand the alliance between Italy, Germany and Russia. It seemed an

* According to confidential diplomatic information.

unholy and unnatural thing. They marveled at the silence in high places. They felt that they were between the devil and the deep blue sea with no love for either.

Then in April, 1940, Germany struck swiftly against Norway and the western warfare was on in earnest. The efforts of allies in aiding the brave Norwegian defense, which started slowly because of the utter surprise, was futile and, within a space of two months, the resistance ceased. Germany had paid over 60,000 men killed and many wounded in action for the daring invasion, but had gained valuable bases for future use against Britain. The Norwegian government fled to England where it continued to direct the war against the Nazi government of Germany.

Following the invasion of Norway, the Germans struck swiftly through Holland, Belgium, France, Luxemburg, and the English battalions who had arrived in compliance with the pact with the French. Again the Blitzkrieg seemed to daze the opponents of the hard hitting Germans. It was all over in a month's time. The Germans had lost fewer men than in the Norwegian war. Britain nursed its wounds of Dunkirk and settled itself to recuperate while withstanding the shocking effects of continuous bombardment.

Following the collapse of Poland in September of 1939, the Cernius government resigned and President Smetona asked Mr. Merkys to form a new Cabinet. Merkys had considerable experience in administrative duties. He had served as Minister of Defense in 1919 and in 1927. Three times Governor of the Klaipeda Territory, he had recently accepted the position of Mayor of Kaunas, a lucrative and desirable post. His Cabinet was as follows:

Prime Minister	A. Merkys (Nationalist)
Vice Prime Minister	K. Bizauskas (Chr. Dem.)
Min. of the Interior	General K. Skucas (non-party)
Min. of Defense	General K. Musteikis (non-party)
Min. of Finance	E. Galvanauskas (non-party)
Min. of Agriculture	J. Audenas, (Soc. Pop.)
Min. of Communications	Masiliunas (Chr. Dem.)
Min. of Education	Dr. A. Jokantas (non-party)
Min. of Justice	Dr. A. Tamosaitis (Soc. Pop.)
Min. of Foreign Affairs	J. Urbys (non-party)

The Cabinet of Mr. Merkys was very much the same as that of Cernius although the aggressive leadership of Merkys produced

a noticeable change. This Cabinet was fated to see Lithuania thrown into the maw of the aggressor with the coming of Russia in June, 1940, disguised as a great humanitarian guardian. This Cabinet refused President Smetona's plea for a token resistance to the invasion of the land which had known liberty in the Twentieth Century only since 1918.

The immediate problem which concerned all Lithuania was the proper exploitation of the Vilnius Territory. On October 10, 1939, the Mutual Pact of Assistance was signed with Russia. Elaborate preparations were made to take over from the Russians. General Vitkauskas was chosen to lead the army of occupation into the Territory. At the frontier posts, the barriers were sawed and the Lithuanians moved in.

Meanwhile, thousands of Lithuanians had gathered in Vilnius at the foot of the Hill of Gediminas to await the arrival of the General and the official hoisting of the Lithuanian standard to signify that Vilnius was once again sovereign Lithuanian soil. Poles and Jews watched the proceedings with dull interest. The Russian soldiers rather foolishly meandered about the streets of Vilnius in their tanks and battle wagons. None seemed to know just where they were going or why and these soldiers apparently saw no significance to the Lithuanian celebration. Were they not all Tovarich? Apparently the Lithuanians preferred to treat them as intruders.

I spoke with a young Jewish newspaper man who remarked, "I hold to the opinion that Russia has given this Vilnius Territory to Lithuania because they think more good can be achieved if chauvinism gets full play." He foretold the complete absorption of Lithuania by Russia and quite frankly stated that it would meet with his approval since his people would then get better advantages for trading.

On January 5, 1940, the Lithuanians announced that they would sell to Russia the following list of goods: 12 million lits worth of hogs and 9,300,000 lits worth of dairy products during the year 1940. She would receive from Russia in the trade: 5,400 tons of cement; 2,000 tons of iron; 1,000 tons of iron beams; 160,000 square meters of glass; 39,000 tons of salt; 15,500 tons of kerosene; 3,100 tons of benzine; 1,500,000 lits worth of sewing machines (cheap imitation of the Singer Sewing machine) and 50,000 tons of superphosphates.

During 1939, the Lithuanians had produced 7,000,000 lits worth of their natural fuel, peat. Since coal became increasingly more difficult to obtain, it is well that they did. The winter 1939-1940 was one of the most severe and many homes in Lithuania were very cold indeed. The Polish refugee problem aggravated the situation. Food was becoming more difficult to properly distribute although Lithuania was a natural storehouse of all essential food-stuffs.

The Territory of Vilnius was administered as a Territory by the Lithuanians who showed caution and restraint in dealing with the situation. Russians wondered why they did not move immediately into their capital city. General Cernius headed the first Administration for the Territory and was soon succeeded by Mr. K. Bizauskas. The use of martial law enabled the Lithuanian government to maintain a strict control over the entire population with its varying and dissident elements. The Poles were surly, the White Russians apathetic, the Jews uninterested, and only a few Lithuanians optimistic. The Lithuanians had brought bread with them as they took over the region from the Russians. Many Polish soldiers still roamed about in their uniforms. Some of the wilder elements carried on a rather useless resistance to all forms of authority (a small group of Polish terrorists machine-gunned a Lithuanian train on one occasion; several snipers managed to kill policemen in Vilnius on different occasions; one group managed to set up a broadcasting station in the woods but were apprehended). The Polish refugee problem remained as a horrible nightmare for it kept draining Lithuanian resources even though partial financial aid was reaching the country from America and Great Britain.

CHAPTER TEN.

THE SECOND RUSSIAN INVASION OF LITHUANIA. (1940 A. D.)

The Russians were to other countries of Eastern Europe something of a locust plague that could return from time to time. There was a time when the Muscovites had trembled at the very mention of the Lithuanian name and had paid many a gold ducat for the tribute to the Lithuanian Grand Dukes and Kings. By 1795 A. D., they had completed a series of lopping invasions to include Lithuania, debilitated and dissipated by long association with the Poles, and this historical movement is known as the First Russian Invasion of Lithuania. This Muscovite Occupation lasted for 120 long years. In 1940, the locusts returned to the fair land of Lithuania quite as hungry as before and quite as capable of doing harm.

To better understand the peculiar methods employed by the present day Bolshevik, we must know that during the last two decades, Russia has developed a new regard for her nationality. It is rather a peculiar regard in that it does not seek to fasten itself upon any type and Russia contains many a rare specimen of humanity. It is said that the citizens of the Soviet Union speak some 8 or 9 major languages with over 180 less important languages. Anyone who has watched the seemingly endless processions waiting to view the waxed remains of Lenin in Moscow will vouch for the fact that the types range from the fair haired, blue eyed Viking type to the black, slant eyed type of Mongolia. But they insist they are all Russians and might suggest, if you emphasize that the Great Russian or Muscovite is the natural leader, that Stalin is a Georgian. It is something akin to an absorbing nationality fashioned to be a working part of the enveloping scheme which also utilizes the doctrine of Communism. In 1940, it was directly suggested that Lithuania could very easily find a place in the Union of Soviet Socialistic Republics.

It was difficult for the Lithuanian government authorities to ascertain the exact moment when Russia would strike. They had been given many a Russian guarantee and "sacred word of honor" in the various treaties and agreements solemnly signed. One of the most interesting is the preamble to the Lithuanian-Rus-

sian Treaty of Moscow, duly signed at Moscow on July 12, 1920 and referred to several times later by Russian diplomats.

"Relying on the strength of a declaration made by the Federal Soviet Socialist Republics of Russia, to the effect that all peoples of every nationality have the right of self determination and complete separation from the State to which they belonged previously, Russia, without any reservation whatsoever, recognizes Lithuania as a self governing and independent State, with all juridical consequences that follow such a recognition and, in a spirit of free and good will, renounces all sovereignty rights of Russia concerning the Lithuanian nation and Lithuanian territory which previously belonged to her. The fact that Lithuania for some time was under Russian sovereignty does not impose on the Lithuanian people or their territory any obligations towards Russia."

The Lithuanian authorities had reason to believe that the Russians were adults and knew their own mind when they signed the treaty of Moscow. They believed that they were men of honor and would keep their part of the Pact. Though other nations were breaking sacred pledges, the Russians wished to be regarded as a nation which was definitely above such action. Her method of accomplishing the same end was more subtle though even less honourable than that employed by nations she condemned.

The Lithuanian authorities carefully reviewed the history of Russian diplomacy during 1920-1940 and observed that their policy was a shifting one guided solely by expediency. They divided their study in four sections to wit:

The period from 1920-1925, which was characterized by an intense activity on the part of the Bolshevik diplomats to bring order and a sense of security to the USSR. The urge towards International Communism was strong during this period and agents were abroad testing whether this system could endure elsewhere. Russia immediately joined the League as soon as that august body would receive her and yearningly looked to the United States for recognition although she consistently referred to Americans as being money mad, gangster ridden and socially infantile. She laughed whenever a politician stated the well known fact that Russians carefully unearthed gold so the foolish American could return it to the earth. At home, Russia was very busy with long range programs involving collectivism, industrialization and rearmament.

The period from 1926-1933 might be termed the Non-aggression Pact Period. Russia was carefully preparing the soil for future expansion. Nationalism was found to be better for the Russian than International Communism. Over 25,000 farms were collectivized and a billion acres were reported under cultivation. While plenty was reported in one province, 3,000,000 peasants starved to death for want of proper distributing facilities. The railroads and roads of Russia were antiquated but attention was feverishly given to the new projects included under the five year plans.

The years from 1934-1938 can be called the period for Trade agreements. It was necessary for Russia to get materials from abroad. The gullible career men of the American State Dept. had advocated recognition though they could not see the end of such recognition. Russia discovered that America preferred gold to such basic materials as steel, aluminum and copper, and such finished articles as motors, airplanes, cars and dynamos. Litvinov was snubbed by the democracies since they did not prefer to be realistic and to face the growing threat of Germany. Only France, Czechoslovakia, Spain and Lithuania appeared to be friendly with the gangly giant in the East. Lithuania was friendly but not disposed to join in military action against anyone. Latvia, Estonia and Finland were disposed to distrust all Russian maneuvers. Poland remained aloof.

The years from 1938-1940 show Russia unmasked and clearly on a nationalistic rampage. She felt that she was fully prepared for any and all emergencies. She wished to play ball, so to speak, with the power boys. She looked hungrily at her former "Baltic Windows" and there was the feeling that Stalin would soon seek to emulate Peter the Great. Russian writers were whitewashing such infamous characters as Ivan the Terrible. She continued to spend colossal sums for propaganda in America. Her Embassy put on parties that all diplomats anxiously and feverishly wished to attend. The boys of the Kremlin sacked the Jew Litvinov so they could temporarily do business with Herr Hitler. Though the Germans were rightly considered the natural enemies of Russia and though they had long considered the full implications of the "Drang nach Osten" outbursts of the little Austrian, the Russians weighed the big shot democracies in the balance and found them wanting. They could always change their tune if they so desired.

It was power diplomacy and, in 1939, Germany had the power. Russia also worried over the possibility that she might be left alone with a first class war with the Germans. Her haste to enter Poland from the rear, her defeat at the hands of the Finns and the general dislike of Russia the world over, severely bent her prestige. In 1940, with Germany holding the major part of Europe under her control and the Italians entirely subjugated by the Wilhelmstrasse gang, the Russian high command advised the Georgian Prince in the Kremlin that a long war would mean a victory for the democracies. Russia immediately pinched off supplies, demanded various concessions from Germany and brought on the attack of June 22nd. Her course was set to win the war and the peace that would follow. She yearned for a position as the European power with control of the Baltic and the Mediterranean Sea.

The Lithuanian statesmen considered all of these matters very carefully. They felt that Russian desire for expansion would soon include them for the Russian was aping the German technique in encirclement for military purposes. It was to be, most likely, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and then Finland. After Finland, it was to be Bessarabia, Roumania, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey. In time, it would be a greater part of central Europe.

One success leads to another. The Lithuanians knew that Germany had turned over the Baltic area to Russian influence. It looked hopeless. They carefully studied the various signed agreements and treaties with Russia. They reviewed the Treaty of Non-Aggression of 1926 which was renewed in 1934 to run from 1934 to 1944. Article II read: "The Republic of Lithuania and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics mutually undertake to respect, in all circumstances, the sovereignty and territorial integrity and inviolability of each other."

Article III: "Each of the two contracting parties undertakes to refrain from any aggressive action whatsoever against the other party."

Thus spoke Tovarich in the year 1926. The Russian had in mind the firm dealing with individual States so that combinations would not be formed against her. In the year 1933, on July 4, was signed at London, a document which defined aggression. Incidentally, the Russian was the initiator of the following instrument. It reads in part:

Article II: "Accordingly, the aggressor in an international conflict shall, without prejudice to the agreements in force between the parties to the dispute, be considered to be that State which is the first to commit any of the following actions:

a) Invasion by its armed forces, with or without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State."

Article III: "No political, military, economic or other considerations may serve as an excuse of justification for the aggression referred to in Article II."

Just what did the Russian have in mind? Apparently, Russian politics and diplomacy called for a masking of real objectives during the period of sparring and testing. It was better to engage in high sounding and harmless phraseology than no phrasing whatsoever.

Obviously the Russians would violate all of their solemn treaties with Lithuania if she now persisted in forcing the issue on her flimsy and false accusations. Was the front with Germany false? The Lithuanian statesmen feared as much but had no way of accurately ascertaining this. The words of Minister Zdanov which had been uttered in Moscow in November, 1936 took on a new significance. They were: "We wish to live in peace with the Baltic countries, but if these tiny peoples allow big adventurers to use their territories for big adventures, we shall widen our little window into Europe with the help of the Red Army."

The Lithuanians recalled how in April, 1936, the Russian Marshal Jegorov invited the military leaders of the Baltic States to visit (and be impressed) the sight seeing spots of the Russian Re-armament Program. In this same year, in May, Mr. Hackzell, the Finnish Foreign Minister, made a trip to the Baltic States in order to plead for a closer military collaboration. He was very realistic in his approach to the problem but Estonia, though mildly responsive, was cautious. Latvia was cool, and Lithuania was definitely cold.

The Lithuanian government knew that the words of Zdanov were untrue for she had never invited "big adventurers" (Germany) to use her territory. In fact, her relations with Germany had not been the best while Memel remained an integral part of the country. She had not been allowed to join the Baltic nations

in a military pact since they feared unnecessary involvement in connection with the Vilnius and Memel affairs. Lithuania had consistently followed a course of peace. She offered as her greatest protection her goodwill to all neighboring nations.

The events of September-October, 1939, had left the Lithuanian authorities with a cold chill. They had been given over to Russia by the Germans in return for Russia's cooperation in the German war scheme. This move had forced the Lithuanians to make the best of a bad situation. The Russians could afford to wait and so made the magnanimous gesture of returning to Lithuania a part of the Vilnius Territory including the capital city. It brought some joy together with apprehension since the Lithuanians had long hoped for the return of their beloved capital city so long denied them by the Poles.

One condition of the Agreement of October 10, 1939, was the immediate reception of a "Protective Garrison" of some 25,000 Russian troops. Stalin smiled sardonically as he insisted on this Trojan horse gift. The gangster spirit was quite evident and the Lithuanians realized that it was "either or." Temporizing, they accepted the gift and the burden.

So engrossed were the Lithuanians in their great humanitarian effort of feeding the numerous Polish refugees thrown into their lap by the turn of events that they did not fully realize the dangers inherent in the garrison situation. The Russian had deployed about Vilnius while awaiting the completion of their garrison barracks at the specified points east of Kaunas. The policy of the Russian commanders seemed to be one that kept the soldiers hermetically sealed within the barrack enclosures lest they become aware of the better living conditions in Lithuania and desert. Indeed, this did take place in the winter and spring of 1939-1940 when several deserters made their way from the camp to hide out in Vilnius. When they were apprehended, they were returned by the Lithuanian police to the Russian authorities. The implications were terrific and the Bolshevik decided to change the story into one of capture and torture by the Lithuanians. It was all quite childish but they made it stick. On May 25, 1940, the Russians solemnly brought their charges. They were that two soldiers had been kidnapped and tortured for the purpose of obtaining information concerning the garrison camps. (It was obvious that the Lithuanians knew all there was to know about

these affairs long before the spring of 1940. At best, there wasn't much to know about them). The second charge was that a rambunctious drunken Russian soldier, who had tried to beat up some Lithuanian policemen in Vilnius and had been killed in the scuffle, was murdered to keep his tongue quiet lest he describe the torture treatment.

Though the charges were quite amazing and completely unfounded, the Lithuanian government politely requested more information. They asked permission to investigate fully and to provide greater police protection lest the Russian soldiers get away from the camps. An American investigator* visited the camps and learned that many Russian soldiers didn't know they were in Lithuania. They were not allowed to fraternize with the "capitalistic" Lithuanians. When the Soviet remained sullen and uncommunicative, the Lithuanian government proposed a joint commission to review the situation and work out an equitable solution. A spirit of apprehension was developing and apparently this is exactly what the Russians desired. The fact of the matter is that the Kremlin boys just couldn't make up their minds for they felt the excuse was too flimsy.

The Lithuanian Minister to Russia found a foreboding atmosphere when he visited Molotov and Stalin. The Russians were quite evidently up to something and he accordingly wired the Lithuanian Prime Minister, Mr. Merkys, to come at once to Moscow for consultations with the Bolsheviks. Mr. Merkys, together with General Reklaitis and Dr. Maciulis, left by plane for Moscow. Molotov handed the Lithuanian delegation some new accusations. They were that the military alliance of the Baltic States was inimical to the best interests of the Soviet Union and that the Soviets had taken exception to an article by Mr. Merkys which had appeared in the *Revue Baltique* in 1940.

It is difficult to conduct serious diplomatic conversations with such people as Molotov and Stalin who seem astute in a puerile sense. However, the full meaning of the clumsy Soviet efforts was sensed by Prime Minister Merkys who promptly advised his Foreign Minister, Mr. Urbsys, to visit the Kremlin. The Tartar wished to have some sort of hostage before releasing Merkys so Urbsys was nominated.

* American Vice Consul Macgowan who speaks perfect Russian.

On June 4, 1940, the Lithuanian guard about the Russian Garrison had been strengthened and it would have been quite a feat to have escaped from the place. The Lithuanian secret police uncovered evidence that completely "blew the top off" the Russian allegations. This efficiency brought on a Russian hatred for the Lithuanian Chief of the Secret Police, Mr. Povilaitis. Mr. Skucas was also far too efficient to merit any Russian love for he quite manfully directed the work as Minister of the Interior. The Russians hated him.

On June 14, 1940 a few minutes before midnight, Mr. Molotov handed the Lithuanian Foreign Minister, Mr. Urbsys, the following ultimatum: (Ultimatum expired at 9 a. m. June 15th.)

- 1) The two officials (Skucas and Povilaitis) who were directly responsible for the provocations committed against the Soviet garrisons must be punished. (The Russian word is liquidation.)
- 2) A new Lithuanian government, completely acceptable to Moscow, must be installed.
- 3) An unlimited number of Russian troops must be immediately admitted into Lithuania.

It had come. There was practically no answer that could be given other than a sober Yes. For Lithuania to attempt resistance was considered by many to be national harakiri since they did not have the strength of the Finns or the favorable terrain to defend. The Russians had massed a huge force of men (about 300,000 men) with a full complement of mobile units on the border. In addition, they had the garrisons at vantage points and the garrisons alone compared favorably with the entire Lithuanian army.

Estonia and Latvia stirred restlessly for they, too, saw the handwriting on the wall. There had been unmistakable signs of the Russian intent to re-occupy their Baltic window States for certain charges were directed against the Baltic Union which the Russians claimed directly threatened the safety of the Soviet Union.

President Smetona and the Cabinet met in lengthy session. This historic gathering took place at the president's palace. Mr. Urbsys sent a message from Moscow that the government must meet in extraordinary session to consider the demands of the So-

viet group. The president called the council of ministers together with the prime minister, the head of the army and the chief of staff at 1 A. M. of June 15, 1940. The text of the ultimatum was received shortly after 2 A. M. President Smetona stressed the obvious truth that it was contrary to the non-aggression pact of October 10, 1939 and that it was clearly a matter of life or death—that a Lithuanian proverb reads, "Even a mouse resists if she is attacked in her hole." President Smetona asked for a Lithuanian resistance to the unprovoked aggression of the Russian hordes. The majority of the council members were unwilling to resist. The Cabinet members lacked a Patrick Henry and were resigned to accept slavery or death without a struggle. The President directed the work of final arrangements before fleeing to Germany. He was well aware of the fact that his life was in danger and that, if apprehended, he would be required to sign over the country to Russia. Mr. Skucas and Povilaitis also reached the border but for some strange reason returned in a futile attempt to deal with the enemy. They have not been reported as alive since their removal to Russian prison camps. Arrangements had been made to leave a limited authority in the hands of prime minister Merkys. The official Act of Absence was reported in the June 17, 1940 issue of the official "Vyriasybes Zinios." The Russian soviets were forced to be content with stressing the untruth that the president had resigned. The escape of Smetona meant the frustration of the Soviet plan and their resort to illegal means.

One proposal that had been made during the last hectic moments of the free Lithuanian government was that General Rastikis head a new cabinet. The Russians immediately objected to this procedure. Russian troops entered Lithuania at 2 P. M. on June 15. The Russian parade began with their tanks which made the short distance from the border to Kaunas in the very poor time of 4 hours. At six P. M., various units began rumbling into the city. One took a sharp turn, clipped a telephone pole and then rammed into the corner of a house. It wobbled on unhurt but everyone was quite convinced that some of the Russian tanks should be given a wide berth. The tanks took up positions at certain points considered strategic. One of these points was conveniently close to the American Legation at Kaunas on Traku Gatve 16.

Airplanes arrived on the following morning and cavalry followed the artillery. Eventually the infantry lumbered along the

Kaunas turnpike and the populace grew tired of the display. Some writers took pleasure in describing the welcome given the Red soldiers as spontaneous. They painted a picture of the multitudes casting flowers before the conquering hosts or, shall we say, "delivering hosts." Well, whatever was written about the welcome, the truth is that it was rather disappointing to the Russians for the Lithuanians felt no need of deliverance. Only a few Bolsheviks could be found in the ranks of the workers and industrialists. The Jewish Communists were Menshevists rather than Bolos and were forced to take a conversion dose. The crowds of interested spectators were apathetic.

Eventually there was trouble in the rural sections for the Russians began appropriating fodder and other supplies from farmers, leaving with them slips of paper purporting to represent promises of repayment in time. The laborers on farms were told that now they had become the rightful owners and many took advantage of this. The vast majority of farmers were owners, however, and the Communist showing was particularly disappointing.

By order of General Vitkauskas, the Lithuanian army was asked to treat the Reds as brothers in arms. There were only slight evidences of disorder. The Russians were quite considerate and allowed the Lithuanian soldiers to remain in their barracks until such a time they themselves would require the room. That time arrived in a few weeks. In the meantime, the Russians camped about the hills and dales of Lithuania and lowered the Lithuanian standards of morals.

The Commissars were busy in the various departments of the government giving directions, changing orders, counting their catch and preparing for the turnover. Special agents went to the jewelry stores asking each to turn over all gems, gold and silver. Houses were confiscated and much of the ado they sought to cover by announcing the needs of the Russian officers whose families would soon come to Kaunas. There was no attempt made to follow any regular procedure and people grew fearful that their number would soon be drawn.

The evening expeditions certainly put fear into practically everyone's heart. Men disappeared one by one. Families grew apprehensive and sorrow filled the air. Trains bore prisoners to-

wards Siberia while empty trains returned carrying only huge banners which were labeled "Food for Lithuanian Comrades." Imagine bringing food to a filled granary. No one had ever complained about a lack of food in Lithuania, until the Russians arrived to steal the surpluses.

The air was filled with propaganda. Loud speakers were installed in public parks and along the streets. Red orators seemed to have a fine supply of wind and never tired. Some people stopped to listen. The gatherings that took place in the large park atop the hill grew in intensity. Speakers talked about how Smetona had fled with all of the Lithuanian gold. (The truth is that a part of Lithuanian gold was either in New York or London). Speakers assailed practically all of the former government officials and sought to convince the people that they had been beaten down, cheated and starved. The last especially was difficult to believe but many listened and some agreed. It was all quite strange. The Russians were disgusted with the Lithuanians for they didn't seem interested in Communism. Even the Prime Minister Paleckis went temporarily daffy and galloped around in his nightie shouting: "I don't want to sell my people."

The real rulers of Lithuania were now the Assistant Commissar for Foreign Affairs, the Russian with the peculiar name, Dekanozov (means son of a deacon) and his trusty Comrade, the former Envoy Extraordinary to Lithuania, Mr. Pozdniakov. They directed all of the activity in the government offices still functioning.

On July 18, the political prisoners were released from jail. These men paraded about and were soon called upon to testify upon the radio much after the manner of our peculiar radio testimonial broadcasts. Their words were nearly as hot as the American listens to on certain evenings. They surely were even more tiresome. The vast majority of people wandered about as they wondered just what to do. The Russian occupation had thrown everything into confusion and these Red brothers were certainly eating well and purchasing everything on hand with their worthless roubles.

The picture of the government in Lithuania on June 18, 1940 was an odd jumble. Nothing seemed to make sense for the Russians quite glibly spoke of the free expression of the will of the people. Yet Commissar Dekanozov, the son of the deacon,

and Russ Envoy Mr. Pozdniakov had chosen Justin Paleckis to head the government. They had insisted that Mr. Merkys appoint Paleckis Prime Minister and then resign. It was a travesty of justice.* The Russians asked Mr. Urbys to delay in Moscow; they were sure he would like the climate. A few days later, they announced that Merkys had attempted to flee to Sweden via the airline from Riga to Stockholm. No one will ever be quite certain that such was the case since obviously one could not accept anything the Bolsheviks said. Even when spoken *ex cathedra* by Stalin himself, the Russian word must be distrusted.

While the people were being treated to the military display, the Russians were busy consolidating their positions within and without the government. Mr. Kreve-Mickevicius was named the new Foreign Minister though the Russians quite blandly pointed out the uselessness of such a post. All other Ministries had their Russian advisory board. It was quite impossible to do business with a Lithuanian government for its independence had ceased to exist when Smetona had left Kaunas.

By June 22, 1940, there were outbreaks reported in factories. Owners had been reported as "enemies of the people." This dreaded term became quite popular as the people became drunk on the new and heady political liquor. On June 24, the following cable was drawn up and sent by some workers to Josef Stalin: "Upon the occasion of this meeting on June 24th, we, laborers of Kaunas, send warm greetings to you Dear Josef, son of Vasarion, and express to you our deep thanks for the assistance rendered by you in our fight against the bloody Smetona regime and for the liberation of the Lithuanian people. Long life to Comrade Stalin, the liberator of nations."

On June 25, 1940, the Communist Party was legalized in Lithuania and incidentally, all other parties went out. The Lithuanian Communist Party received the newly completed Labor Building for their headquarters. The many parades usually wound up before the Russian Legation Building on Laisves Aleja (Freedom Avenue).

By June 28th, the press was well throttled and many papers definitely "out of circulation." An announcement was made on

* Mr. Merkys was incompetent to choose his own successor according to the text of the Lithuanian constitution. Mr. Smetona, the President, was at this time a guest of the German government.

this day that the Seimas was hereby dissolved since it had been the creation of the President and was not a freely chosen body. The Russian language is heard upon the streets of Kaunas.

Mr. Galvanauskas had assumed the position of Minister of Finance in the illegal government. He was a well known liberal and was well versed in financial matters. However, he found that he could stand the Russian manipulations only until July 5, 1940 when he resigned and escaped abroad.

On July 7th, the Lithuanians scanned the list of Seimas candidates. Included in the list were opera singers, musicians, soldiers, and some who just put themselves down as "faithful sons of the people." On this same day, the army managed to spout forth these resolutions: "We, sons of the People, will not shoot our brothers. Long life to the People's government. Long life to Stalin. Remove the reactionary army leaders. Long life to the 13th Soviet Republic. (They did manage to make it the 14th). Long life to the Communist party. The People's army is only with the people. We demand that the Lithuanian army be fully amalgamated with the Red army." Such resolutions made the Bolsheviks smile.

On July 10th, a new Estonian Minister to Lithuania was named. Recalled was the Hon. Mr. Attik, Lutheran Bishop from Estonia and former Foreign Minister. This action was certain proof of the changeover in Estonia. The Baltic States were Bolshevistic.

There was trouble brewing in practically all industrial plants. Workers were taking over. The owners were allowed to direct the work as long as they showed no signs of interfering with the organizing work of sovietization. Workers grinned at their former employers with that strange feline glare preceding the feast. It was decidedly an unpleasant situation.

During these hectic days, one could observe continuous strumming on the sentimental chords of the nation. The radio blared an unending story of the changes wrought. Instruction was given to worker and farmer. Orators employed by the government radio stations used strong words with little rhyme or reason. At best, the whole program was one calculated to rouse rabble so that the complete surrender to the Bolsheviks would speedily be brought about.

The puppet government of Paleckis quietly and subserviently went to work to transform everything within the country to a So-

viet stamp. Uniforms of police were made plain. Soldiers were urged to regard the Russians as brothers. Farmers were told to carry on in much the same manner they did while enjoying the guidance of a Lithuanian government. Paleckis dissolved the Seimas and called for an election, the results of which could have accurately been foretold without much trouble. On July 15th, the elections were held and the Bolsheviks won a complete victory. The Lithuanian people, actuated by fear, sold their independence to the Bolsheviks for a mess of promised pottage.* On July 30, 1940, the American Minister left the enslaved country since it was impossible to carry on a semblance of representation with an enslaved people. He left with keen regret since the Lithuanians had so amply demonstrated their right to a better state.

Within a short time, the Russians ordered all Consular representation, which had been left in Kaunas, to be removed. Their policy allows the United States offices only in Moscow. In contrast, we allow the Bolsheviks to wander in and out of various posts in our land, and to put on a show that leaves all good Americans wondering.

It was rather difficult for the Russians to properly work up any enthusiasm for their system. They were hard put to find any candidates for their benefits. The Lithuanian people quite apparently had had no need for their deliverance. The Russians were as unwanted as the locusts. Their disgusting habits made a very poor impression upon even those inclined to regard Germany as a potential enemy. Organizers, roaming about the country, continually suggested to the farm helpers that they should take over from the peasant owner. It was all very confusing, for the farm helper didn't want to take over anything from his friend and co-worker.

The most vicious piece of business was the organization which I have called the "Night Riders." These bands of toughs would roam through the streets seeking out any "enemy of the people." Just who were enemies of the people was quite beyond the ken of the average Lithuanian. Was it the banker, the politician, the estate owner, the clergy, the professional men? It was true that these people were disappearing. It was true that any person who might have claimed to have been steadfastly Lithuanian and a patriot was under suspicion. On June 20, 1940, a real purge was on

* One estimate is that only 17% of the people actually voted for the measures proposed by Dekamozov.



Age passing on the handicraft to youth



A Palace and Park in Palanga

so that the "Russian Fear" might properly descend upon the stubborn people. The Russians were exasperated that these people couldn't see the "tremendous benefits" resulting from the "deliverance." Over 2,000 persons were purged on this 20th of June and great was the mourning wail sent up by a stricken nation being tortured. Men were liquidated, imprisoned or deported to dread Siberia. Trains were moving labeled "Enemies of the People." Returning empty trains bore the amusing legend, "Food for the Starving Lithuanians." It was quite amazing that a so called civilized nation could possibly attempt such a hoax. Many people committed suicide. Others went insane. The Russians were accomplishing their mission from Moscow.

While the foreign observers watched the travesty in dismay, the Russian Commissars recruited their Lithuanian stooges who were carefully schooled in Soviet tactics. The fact of the matter is that in every country there are individuals who will grasp at the tempting control handle. Volunteers stepped forward to assist in the work of destroying Lithuania. Those who had labored long and well that Lithuania might live either fled the country or remained to face the inevitable fate that they knew was in store for them. All people showed the effects of a paralyzing fear.

All Constitutional government had disappeared from Lithuania when the Russians forced Merkys to resign. It is true that they sought some semblance of following order by asking that Paleckis replace him. However, Paleckis assumed the role of Prime Minister in quite an unconstitutional manner since his choice was merely a Russian appointment without fulfillment of the requirements of the Lithuanian Constitution. His Cabinet was quite unique in that several misguided patriots, hoping against hope, consented to serve as long as they could. Galvanauskas and Kreve-Mickevicius are two that fall into this category. The Russians promptly ordered Paleckis to dissolve the Seimas and order an election. They assured him that the details of the election would be taken care of by them. They were.

Notices appeared that an election would be held. The list of July 7th has already been mentioned. It was emphasized that whoever failed to vote would be considered an "enemy of the people." This useful term always meant that unless the Lithuanians obeyed their Russian masters they would be treated to ap-

proprate punishment in due season. No one entertained any other idea than to vote.

Voting day arrived and there was a "100%" movement to the polls. Only one ballot had been printed, of course, since the only legal party was the Communist Party. In order to insure a vote equally as good as those arranged by Herr Hitler, certain voting squads visited various precincts. One precinct was visited several times by a group that had imbibed too freely of firewater and the net result of the vote there was 122%. This error was quickly rectified but still stands as the most magnificent plurality of votes. Some of our own American students in Lithuania who were waiting for the sailing of the U. S. S. "American Legion" managed to arrive with American passports wherein appears the word "Balsavo." It means, voted.

The Russian soldiers had hastily erected a safeguard around the little Lithuanian country lest the "big adventurers" should come in? No, lest the patriotic Lithuanians who had tarried too long should get out. In places, it was approximately three miles in depth and the zone was patrolled by Russian guards with rifles that occasionally barked at some "enemies of the people" who were trying to escape from the deliverer. Some people managed to pass through the barbed wire entanglements of this protective zone by "greasing the palm" of the eager Bolshevik soldiers. It is said that General Rastikis and other officers had forced their way through the zone with the aid of a few persuasive hand grenades.

The Russians had permitted the Lithuanian soldiers to retain their arms and ammunition. They carefully watched the troop concentrations, however, and took necessary precautions lest the Lithuanian soldiers attempt a belated uprising. In time, they arranged the army of Lithuania into their pattern. The young fellows were rather bewildered by the turn of affairs and only a few outbursts were recorded. The officers were quickly forced into line with Lithuanian Soviet orders. Commanders were shifted adroitly lest they constitute a threat. It was done with precision and attests the thoroughness of Russian "liberation."

Nationalization was quickly introduced. Inspectors worked at the behest of the Commissars who directed the organized thievery. They made the rounds of all jewelry stores to obtain

gold and silver which had been nationalized. They took over banks, industries, etc. Inventories were carefully scanned in order that a complete record of the Lithuanian loot could be forwarded to the Kremlin. They literally relieved many Lithuanians of everything but debts.

Russian soldiers circulated from shop to shop in order that purchases could be made. In a few weeks after the first troops had entered to take over Lithuania, the stocks of such things as clothes, cameras, radios, etc., completely disappeared. Prices steadily rose until eventually the ceiling of impossible prices was reached. A suit of clothes or an overcoat cost \$255.00. A pair of shoes could be purchased if you had \$65.00. Your old pair could be half soled for \$10.00. I am speaking of American dollars. Of course, any purchase would be marked in your passport and Commissars would wonder just where you got the money and whether or not you had any more. Few bought anything. Eggs had been most common in Lithuania when order prevailed and the Cooperatives were exporting thousands of tons of them to England. After the arrival of the Russians they cost \$1.00 apiece.

The Seimas which resulted from the wild elections of July, 1940, promptly showed its new and independent nature by docilely voting according to the dictates of Comrade Dekanozov, the son of a deacon (Russian ruler of Lithuania). The American reaction is very well shown by the carefully worded comment by Sumner Welles made public on July 23, 1940:

"During these past few days, the devious processes whereunder the political independence and territorial integrity of the three small Baltic republics—Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania—were to be deliberately annihilated by one of their more powerful neighbors, have been rapidly drawing to their conclusion.

"From the day when the peoples of these republics first gained their independent and democratic form of government, the people of the United States have watched their admirable progress in self government with deep and sympathetic interest.

"The policy of this government is universally known. The people of the United States are opposed to predatory activities no matter whether they are carried on by the use of force or by the threat of force. They are likewise opposed to any form of intervention on the part of one state, however powerful, in the domestic concerns of any other state, however weak.

"These principles constitute the very foundation upon which the existing relationship between the 21 sovereign republics of the new world rests.

"The United States will continue to stand by these principles, because of the conviction of the American people that, unless the doctrine in which these principles are inherent, once again governs the relations between nations, the rule of reason, of justice and of law, in other words the basis of modern civilization itself, cannot be preserved."

This official indictment of Russia by the United States still stands. It measures the future course that we will follow when victory over Germany, Japan, and Italy is achieved. Lithuania will receive the full support of America in setting up an independent Republic.

Laisves Aleja had been renamed Stalino Gatve and it was perhaps well, since all true liberty had disappeared. Stalin's satellites were in complete charge and were suggesting that Lithuania become the 13th Republic to join the exalted Union. It became the 14th when the Seimas voted for inclusion.

While the prices for ordinary commodities advanced over 300%, the wages of the individual were increased some 30%. The situation was so bad that a laborer could only afford a good look at an egg in the show window.

In Kaunas and other cities, they nationalized some 2,860 homes and apartment buildings from which 7,333 families were evicted to make room for Soviet authorities who had come to help run (ruin) the country. Though butter was \$2.85 per pound, sugar \$1.90 per pound and other prices in proportion, the Russians managed to live well for they didn't believe in denying themselves. It was perhaps their reward for being forced to live so far away from their Oriental home.

The OGPU was intensely active. Individuals were removed when they could not prove that they had thought or felt this or that. A fatalism descended upon those Lithuanians who had been spared the slaughter and the courts could witness the peculiar scene of a man testifying against himself even in untruths because he had lost all feeling. On Feb. 16, 1941, the Russians had ordered that no one celebrate Independence Day but hundreds

took the opportunity to pray God for deliverance. Some kissed the statue of their patriots and sang their beloved Lithuanian hymns. Others performed their patriotic rites in Church. The Russians seized many of these "offenders" and inflicted summary punishment. Priests, peasants and students were included in the group that paid the penalties. Only 26 newspapers and magazines remained of the 140 which had been circulating prior to the Russian invasion. The articles that were appearing could best be described as Communistic drivel. Endless quotations from the Communistic writings appeared. Writers were seeking to show that Communism was the correct method for Lithuania but words were wasted in view of the Russian practice. Everyone knew too well that these theories of Communism were quite distasteful when forced down the throat of a nation.

The usual method of the U.S.S.R. is to flood an unsuspecting or "victim" country with its new and attractive literature. Some 120 pamphlets on Marxist-Leninist subjects appeared and were circulated. In addition, there were about 60 translations of Russian authors into the Lithuanian language. Some of Stalin's works were also given to the Lithuanian reading public. In this same connection, I might mention that the Godless Society was active in youthful circles especially. This "Bezbozhnik" rot was spread throughout Lithuania but apparently did not take root anywhere and again the Russians were quite disappointed in the Lithuanian people.

Marshal Timoshenko gave a good expression of Russian thought on May 1, 1941, when he said: "The working people of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, only after having united themselves with the family of the Soviet nations, are now free and happily celebrate a new life without landowners and without capitalists." It seemed to fit quite naturally the warning Russia gave on April 13, 1941 when the government stated: "the Japanese-Soviet Pact of neutrality is a bewildering blow at the interests of the United States of America and Great Britain." In a short time, the Russians would be relieved of the "Lithuanian happiness" and would mourn their ill wishes for the best interests of the United States and Great Britain. Nations are as fickle as debutantes.

In June, 1941, the Germans brought sweet surcease to the Bolshevik woes but substituted a new and deadly menace of Nazification. Simultaneously with the German action of June 22, 1941,

the Lithuanians in Kaunas had begun their great movement for freedom. Several thousand freedom fighters had advanced on the Panemune arsenal to seize over 3,000 rifles and machine guns. They found no ammunition at this place (quite typical of Russian care and reminiscent of the World War I story of how shells larger than the required calibre had been supplied the forts of Kaunas lest a revolution be successful). Another group advanced on the arsenal in Viliampole where more guns and a large quantity of ammunition were found. At 10 A. M., the radio station at Kaunas was in the hands of the freedom fighters. Prisons had yielded hundreds of men anxious to fight against the Russian oppressors. There can be much speculation as to whether or not the revolt would have succeeded without the advance of the Germans but the fact remains that the Lithuanians arose against the Russian taskmasters before the German troops were near Kaunas and Vilnius.

CHAPTER ELEVEN.

THE LITHUANIAN REVOLT AND THE GERMAN OCCUPATION.

It was this spontaneous uprising that caused such dismay in Russian ranks and brought on the hasty retreat that approximated a rout. Fighting in the streets of Kaunas had resulted in the death of over 4,000 freedom fighters and the wounding of over 10,000. The large Catholic Church which crowns the hill of Kaunas served as a rallying place for this action. In Vilnius the fighting was severe and at Siauliai a parting farewell was punctuated by Lithuanian bullets. Many Red soldiers discarded their guns and uniforms to seek safety in hiding. The country breathed more easily when the "locusts" had been cleared out.

At 10:30 A. M. on June 23, 1941, the restitution of the Lithuanian Republic was proclaimed. Dr. J. Ambrozevicius was chosen deputy Prime Minister. The Lithuanian standard was once again raised above the tower of the War Museum in Kaunas and the liberty bell which had been donated by Lithuanian Americans was rung. It was a touching ceremony and a portion of the declaration read: "would endeavor to base Lithuania's future on principles of national and social justice."

It should be noted that over 125,000 Lithuanians had taken part in this spontaneous uprising. Several thousand soldiers had deserted from Soviet ranks to fight the good fight. Several tanks had been taken by the workers from a metal factory but they did not understand how to operate them.

A sad commentary to the action was the frantic and brutal action of the Russians. One unit rushed to a concentration camp at Praveniskiai where some 500 peasants had been herded after failing to deliver the required amounts of farm produce which had been demanded by the Russians. Included in this group were several women, one of whom was pregnant. One mother had two of her small daughters with her. They were ordered into one corner of the camp whereupon the Soviet soldiers opened fire with machine guns to mow them down. Not content with this, they hurled a few hand grenades into the writhing, groaning mass of humanity and when a few sorely wounded sought to crawl away, they used their bayonets. As Duranty might have said: "One life, one kopek."

The Russians were frantic, for the people had revolted. After the carnage, they drove hastily away.

Prisons were emptied and hostages were taken towards Russia. On the way out of Lithuania, the running Russians occasionally stopped to set fire to a house. The Lithuanian freedom fighters were not to be denied, however, and kept at their task. The German troops were able to march hastily through a delivered Lithuania.

In taking stock, the Lithuanians discovered that over 60,000 persons had been deported to Siberia. In addition, over 50,000 people had fled to Germany (this number included those who had chosen to be evacuated as Germans). Most ominous was the estimate that some 100,000 persons were killed or missing. Great had been the Russian blow to the small and unoffending Republic of Lithuania. Since this estimate was made, the figure of persons deported to Siberia, or dispersed, is calculated at nearly 200,000 men, women and children. At the terrible Solovetsky prison near Archangel from whence, it is said, no one ever returns alive, are the former Prime Minister Merkys, former Foreign Minister Urbys, and others.

Churches had been stripped of their precious ornaments and sacred vessels. Museums had been looted. Libraries had been burned. The industrial and economic life of the stricken nation had been ruined. The "freedom fighters" viewed the scenes of desolation and ruin, but resolved to build again, for such is the Lithuanian way.

The Germans reached Kaunas and Vilnius on the afternoon of June 24th. They rolled quickly into the liberated Lithuania. The postoffice of Kaunas was occupied on June 25th though other government buildings were left in charge of the Lithuanian Provisional Government. With Teutonic thoroughness, the German occupation forces took up positions throughout Lithuania. It was apparent that they wished to impose their protective custody over the Lithuanians. The big adventurers had come but one good result had been obtained, namely, freedom from the terrible Russians.

The Lithuanian Provisional Government was constituted as follows:

Prime Minister—Colonel K. Skirpa.

Vice Prime Minister—Dr. J. Ambrozevicius.

Others: General Rastikis, Col. A. Slepetyš, J. Matulionis, Dr. Damušis, Pr. Vainauskas, Dr. J. Pajaujis, M. Mackevičius, Dr. K. Vencius, Prof. B. Vitkus, V. Landsbergis, A. Navickis and R. Skipitis.

This government had been born in the violence of the June uprising against the Russian tyrant. They found it very difficult to understand the attitude of the German occupation authorities. All doubts that they held were dispelled by the announcement of July 28, 1941. Herr Heinrich Lohse, the newly appointed Reich Commissioner, posted the following notice:

"Lithuanians!

"By a decree issued on July 17, 1941, the Fuehrer of the Greater German Reich, Adolph Hitler, has appointed me Reich Commissar for the Ostland. The former free State of Lithuania (Freistaat Litauen) is also included in this territory. The Fuehrer has also, by a decree of the same date, appointed Dr. Adrian von Renteln Commissar General for the region of the former free Lithuanian State. Dr. von Renteln is responsible to me, as the representative of the Reich Government in the Reich Commissariat at Ostland, for the execution in Lithuania of all decrees and regulations of the Reich Government and of those issued by me. His own orders and regulations within the boundaries of this region must also be carried out in every instance.

"First of all, I appeal to the residents of the regions south of the Daugava and to those within the borders of the former free Lithuanian State to aid me with all your strength and resolve in my task to reestablish order and work in these regions.

"Bolshevism threatens entire Europe. It was preparing to attack Germany. It has inflicted most horrible wounds upon you. If this enemy of the world had stayed among you a few years more, naught would have remained of your property and nation. The bolshevik leaders would have hauled you to Siberia, would have pillaged and murdered you.

"The armed forces of the German people have routed the bolshevik world enemy at the cost of their own blood, there-

fore, everyone will understand that with this the German nation has assumed the duty and the right to arrange conditions in such a way that a similar peril may never again menace the traditions of the European nations and even their very existence.

"Those who during the past twenty years had promised you so much liberty believed that they had to carry on their policies by maneuvering between the interests of the Soviet Union and the German Reich. But the moment the German Reich, mindful of its own interests, withdrew its influence from this region, the fatality of this attitude in the full sense of these words was immediately proven to you all. It gave the Soviet Union a chance to attack you without resistance.

"Heedless of all the harm done to Germanism and notwithstanding all the attacks made on the national-socialist German Reich, the Government of the Reich will strive in the interests of your welfare to assure you of work, bread and progressive development. However, the German Administration must insist that all of its regulations be carried out unconditionally, for they serve but a single purpose: the security of the country and the safety of your lives.

"The German administration will enlist the cooperation of your representatives in the communities and towns when necessary, it will invite trustworthy men of your nation through whom your wishes may be relayed to the Reich Commissar, the Commissar General and the District Commissars; and it will permit you to form defensive units to safeguard your work and life. I expect that the entire population will comply with my instructions so that the severe wounds also inflicted upon you by the bolshevik enemy of the world could be healed. Only then in the future will culture and well-being revive, only then will you all be able to live in peace. The German Reich gives you this possibility. It is now up to you to make use of it."

(Signed) Heinrich Lohse.

Protests of the provisional government of Lithuania went unheeded. A cable to Herr Hitler went unanswered. Apparently the German government wished all Lithuanians would settle peace-

fully into the Greater Reich without considering it a form of economic slavery as distasteful as that enjoyed under the red star.

On August 5, 1941, the Lithuanian Provisional Government was forced to resign. Five days later, the people gathered in front of the War Museum to make a public protest by publicly depositing a wreath at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier on which appears the "Paminklas žuvusiems už Lietuvos Laisvę." It was very difficult for these people to understand why the Germans refused to hear their petitions for liberty. They joined in singing "Lithuania, Our Fatherland" and then listened to the carefully chosen words of Dr. Ambrozevicius who said, "Do not despair and lose faith in the undying ideal of liberty." When this meeting had been concluded, a German soldier removed the Lithuanian national flag from the War Museum Tower. Those present prayed that the Liberty Bell might soon be heard again in Lithuania.

The attitude of the American government remains unchanged. The presence of the German soldier is just as distasteful as the presence of the Russian soldier for both are representatives of Dictator ridden countries. It is the policy of such countries as Germany to "board out" as many soldiers as possible. The statement of Dr. Windschau is a good example of this economic policy. He made it clear that the Baltic States would be considered a highly intensified agricultural unit of the Reich. The Germans expected to receive from Lithuania:

- 250,000 tons of potatoes,
- 150,000 tons of grain,
- 70,000 tons of fresh meat,
- 70,000 tons of fodder,
- 14,000 tons of butter,
- 10,000 tons of hay.

When news of the historic meeting between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill reached the ears of Lithuanian students, a demonstration was staged. The Germans very promptly dispersed the gathering with the result that several students were injured. It is dangerous to express one's feelings in the German occupied Lithuania.

According to reliable sources, the Jewish minority was maltreated by the German forces. Notices were posted in the towns

ordering the Jews to wear the star of David as a distinguishing mark. They were refused the use of the sidewalks and permitted to settle only in the ghettos and suburbs. Many Jews also suffered similar mistreatment under the Russian Bolshevik and were deported to Siberia where they await liberation.

Since this Chapter of Lithuanian History is not finished and there exists no proper historical perspective, it is apparent that many conclusions might possibly be faulty. Suffice it to say that Lithuanians will never rest until full and complete freedom is attained from both the Russian and German oppressors. They will refuse to treat with a Hitler directed government since the honor and word of this government has not been evidenced in the treatment of Lithuania. Article 4 of the Treaty signed when Lithuania returned the Memel Territory reads: "To strengthen their decision to guarantee the further expansion of friendly relations between Lithuania and Germany, both countries resolve not to use force one against the other, nor to aid a third party exercising force against one of the contracting parties." This accord was duly signed on March 22, 1939. It was slightly over two years old and the Hitler Government had forgotten this sacred pledge to Lithuania.

Solemn words are apparently cheap at any price. The Soviet Ambassador to the Court of St. James said: "The Soviet Union defends the right of every nation to independence and territorial integrity of its country, and its right to establish such social order and choose such form of government as seems opportune and necessary for the better promotion of its economic and cultural prosperity." This statement was given the press shortly after the expression of the freedoms for the world. Russian promises can be purchased in the same market as those of the Nazi and Fascist. Born of the devil, they have only his guarantee.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE DUAL PROBLEM OF VILNIUS AND MEMEL

THE STORY OF VILNIUS

During the Golden Age of Lithuanian history, the mighty legions of Gediminas, Kestutis, Algirdas and Vytautas had swept to great military triumphs. Their battle blasts were feared and respected from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Men from Muscovy cringed by their Kremlin walls. Tartars of Southwestern regions humbly paid their tribute. Kiev, Minsk, Vitebsk, Smolensk, and scores of cities entertained their Lithuanian garrisons. It was in this era that Vilnius had come into being. Vilnius stood as a proud sentinel on the outskirts of the deep forests of Lithuania proper in a strategic position to guard all approaches from the regions bordering on the Valdai Hills and the Pripet marshes.

The great castle of King Gediminas was built on the hill that bears his name today. The fortress castle attracted the usual gathering of merchants, traders, artisans, artists, musicians, metal workers and others who took root near such places to better ply their craft. Thus the city of Vilnius grew up near the fortress that guarded the military highway stretching between the East and West. It is well that we see the significance of this strategic location for it spells future trouble. Great conquerors invariably moved their armies up and down this highway. Gustavus Adolphus, Charles X and Charles XII came this way. Napoleon saw the advantage of passing through Vilnius. During the World War I and II, the German soldiers marched through Vilnius. It was for its strategic value that the Poles coveted it in 1920 A. D.

A pagan temple stood at the foot of the hill in 1323 A. D. when the castle was built and the city founded by King Gediminas. The castle was the scene of many famous gatherings which the King deemed timely. After a busy life of conquest and organization, the Lithuanian ruler died, and as was the custom of the day, was cremated together with his favorite mount.

Elsewhere in this book I have referred more fully to his life and to the disease that transformed the nobles into weaklings. The son of Algirdas, Jogaila, is remembered as the weakling re-

sponsible for the Polish disease. Indolence set in like rigor mortis and strong knights loved ease, splendid manners, fine clothes, good food and wine. They turned into noble saps. Before this disease set in, Vytautas was crowned Grand Duke of all Lithuania and ruled with distinguished ability and skill. Grand Duke Vytautas made Vilnius a greater city during his long rule. He invited German artisans and Jewish traders to visit his realm as well as priests from Poland who brought Christianity to Lithuania. The Polonized Church had a great deal to do with the undoing of the Lithuanian nobility.

In the course of this Polonization, Lithuania lost its vigor and vitality. The nation became increasingly more a Polish appendage since the nobles enjoyed the suffrage while the peasant merely enjoyed the right to work on the land. Huge estates had been created throughout the entire Eastern European section and government was neither by, for, nor of the common people.

Vilnius held her proud head aloft while Lithuania was being slowly and effectively subjugated by her own upper class. The Lithuanian Diet met occasionally in the city to discuss the future action of the Lithuanian nobility but the presence of the Polish priests often nullified truly Lithuanian action. The year 1569 A. D., saw the signing of the Union of Lublin which theoretically bound Lithuania with Poland for time and eternity. Though the old independent spirit surged to the fore occasionally (Prince Radvila), the bulk of influential Lithuanians refused to act for the re-establishment of a separate state.

The peasants who labored upon the farms became confused as to what nationality they actually were. Intermarriage with Poles and White Russians had thinned the blood of many a Lithuanian family. Long residence upon the estate of a Polonized noble had caused others to consider themselves Polish. The city of Vilnius had offered refuge and a place to carry on a trade to many elements which certainly were not Lithuanian. It is little wonder, therefore, that when the census takers went amongst the people, they found a strange assortment of breeds and many people who really didn't know exactly what they were. They would answer the question "What nationality are you?" with the word "Orthodox." When pressed for a more specific answer, they replied that they lived on this ground. "Tuteiši" (of this place).

By 1795 A. D., the Russians had gobbled up what remained of

Lithuania. The cities of Kaunas, Vitebsk, Minsk, and Mogilev, as well as Vilnius fell into the maw of this gangly Eastern giant which had developed so swiftly from the time of Ivan the Terrible. Thus it was that Vilnius came to be known as an Administrative center and the term Vilnius Territory applied to that region lying about the city and which was governed from Vilnius.

The strength of Lithuania lay in the ranks of her peasants who tilled the land. They continued to sing the songs of past glory and dared to hope for eventual liberty. The years of the Russian occupation were long and hard. Many a stout hearted Lithuanian met death or, even worse, was banished to dreaded Siberia. Even the mighty Russia, however, failed to quench the flame of hope in the Lithuanian breast and when Germany moved against Russia in the Great War of 1914-1918, the patriots rose to the occasion to demand complete independence.

It was quite natural that they should continue to designate Vilnius as their capital city. Here lay the remains of two great hero Chieftains, Gediminas and Vytautas, who had designated it as their capital city and here much of Lithuania's history was written. Here the great Lithuanian Diets had been held. In the year 1800, Lithuanian scholars had established the great Lithuanian University at Vilnius.

On July 12, 1920, the Lithuanian and Russian Envoys gathered at Moscow to draw up the Treaty under which Lithuania was designated as the Administrative Districts of Vilnius, Kaunas, Gardinas and Suvalkai. On October 7, 1920, the Lithuanian and Polish Envoys signed a solemn treaty which guaranteed the City and Territory of Vilnius to Lithuania. Two days later, the Poles made their famous "steal" of the district thus guaranteed. This move was universally condemned but the Poles refused to give it up.* They believed that right was determined by might.

The drive of General Zeligowski and his Polish army was stopped by the Lithuanians before they had penetrated too deeply into the Kaunas district. A line of demarcation was agreed upon while the negotiations were carried on. The Lithuanians vigorously protested to the Allied Powers and eventually to the League of Nations. It was to no avail. A never ending stream of

* Mr. Bourgeois, Pres. of the League Council, vigorously protested to the Polish delegate to the League, Mr. Paderewski, who denied the move and denounced Zeligowski as a rebel. (Polish perfidy.)

Commissions and Experts studied the matter but could reach no equitable solution.

An interesting account was told to me by a Polish priest who had acted as Chaplain for General Zeligowski during this campaign. He revealed that the true intent of the move was to set up a Catholic State which would also include Latgalia, and serve as a connecting link between the two Catholic Powers, Lithuania and Poland. This verbal account by the Polish Chaplain reminds one of the Hymans' Proposal.

The League had appointed a Commission to study the Vilnius Affair and present a solution to the question. Mr. Hymans, a Belgium Chairman of the Commission, has given his name to the Plan elaborated by three Polish diplomats, which provided for an autonomous canton which should be a part of Lithuania, upon the request of Pilsudski. Lithuania, however, was expected to sign a thorough going agreement, involving military and commercial terms, with Poland.* This was rejected. Time wore on and Lithuania could not obtain satisfaction from any Court qualified to consider international matters. The Allied Powers and the League were obviously beyond their depth in these complicated matters of ethnology and ethnography.

The Lithuanian government felt very bitter about the action with respect to Vilnius and continued to give voice to their claims whenever possible. Meanwhile, they sealed the marked border quite securely and stationed a strong border guard along the course. No legalized traffic was carried on. The Poles merely glared at the Lithuanian border guards and vice versa. Such a border could well be expected to bring forth various incidents. It was strangely quiet for the most part. Grass grew on the highways near the no man's land that separated Lithuania from her Polish held Vilnius Territory. All ties had been broken and technically a state of war existed. Lithuania let it be known that she was dissatisfied with the condition of things and would be glad to enter negotiations for the return of the region.

Both Lithuania and Poland were nominally Catholic States. The faith of the former received a rude shock in 1925 when the Vatican appointed a Polish Bishop to the Vilnius Diocese, thus

* Gen. Zeligowski held a plebiscite on Feb. 20, 1922 at which only Poles voted. Mar. 24, 1922, the Polish Sejm in Warsaw annexed the territory.

tacitly giving approval to the Polish claim. Lithuania felt constrained, under the circumstances, to eject the Papal Legate and broke off full relations with the Holy See. The Nationalist party made no pretense of their firm belief that priests should stay within their own province of religion without interference in political matters. In practice, they appeared lenient to the politically minded priests and included several in Cabinets. Father Mironas was a notable example. The average Lithuanian evidenced a certain constancy of religious observance.

During the years 1934 and 1935, some discussions were carried on relative to the re-establishment of relations but nothing concrete came of the attempts. The border zone was decidedly an unhealthy place to look over even momentarily. Guards were ever on the alert and ready to take pot shots at suspicious shadows. Poachers and smugglers found it very precarious to carry on their nefarious activity.

The farmers living in and near the zone experienced a great deal of trouble in watching over their goods. For instance, it was not uncommon for haystacks to be put up one day in Lithuania and appear in Poland on the next. During the night some adventurous prowler had moved the border markers. The 520 kilometers of "Administration Line" remained a danger zone.

In the dim and dusky early hours of March 11, 1938, a Lithuanian patrol surprised what they considered a band of poachers. These men were hastily running towards the Polish territory when a guard opened fire. He shot too well and one of the runners lay quite still. It was a member of the Polish Border Guard who lay there on Lithuanian soil. He was dead.

The Lithuanian government immediately offered its sincere regrets to the Polish government and offered condolences to the family of the deceased. There was no reply forthcoming from Poland. Since diplomatic relations were lacking between the two countries, the mode of communication was through a third party. The good offices of the Estonians were utilized for the emergency.

The Polish government gave a brief statement to the press. It stirred up the Poles into a frenzy and many shouted "On to Kowno." Mr. Beck, the Polish Foreign Minister, was not at Warsaw during the first hours of the crisis and his quick arrival served to soften the tempo of the volatile Poles. The canny Mr. Beck wor-

ried (quite rightly) that the Germans might send their troops into Memelland and possibly keep right on coming to Poland. It was his judicious advice that caused the Poles to word a rather innocuous ultimatum asking for an immediate resumption of all normal relations.

Lithuania received the ultimatum on March 17, 1938 and accepted it within the 48 hour period. Communications were exchanged at Tallinn. The Poles celebrated this "victory" while the government planned to immediately follow up its first advantage. A Polish Minister arrived in Kaunas to set up the Polish Legation. After a brief stay at the leading hotel of Kaunas, the Polish eagle could be seen flying high above one of the Villas atop the heights to the North.

The Poles are ready dealers and apt in the art of diplomacy. Their representatives soon arranged fitting commercial and traffic agreements. The railway lines connecting Kaunas and Vilnius were repaired and equipment readied for this run. The Poles showed a great deal of road building activity to connect the two countries though the Lithuanians continued their original program. Obviously Polish trade could never be attractive to Lithuania for both lacked industrial strength.

During the remainder of 1938 and the first half of 1939, the two nations sought to remain friendly though neither one could get themselves to believe that the other was sincere. When Lithuania was confronted with solving the Klaipeda (Memel) Problem, the Poles were quite insistent that she refuse to return anything to Germany. Poland thought any return of territory would prejudice her claim to Danzig and the Corridor. Through this period, both Lithuania and Poland evidenced a great deal of nervousness at the turn of events and kept on the alert. Both fervently prayed for security and hoped that some kind of Collective Action would guarantee it.

Poland considered herself a large power, able and ready to cope with such adversaries as either Germany or Russia. Hitler warned and boasted. Poland drew close to Great Britain and rejected all bids from the Reich. War seemed inevitable. It came on September 1, 1939. Poland was overrun in less than a month.

The course of this war becomes disgusting and mystifying when we think of Russia calmly walking in to stab Poland in the

back. Nothing of a military value could be ascribed to the move, excepting, of course, Russia's preparation for German trouble. It was purely a selfish action which was to remind Germany that something definite had been promised. That something, to which I refer, was one half of Poland plus the Vilnius Territory and the zones of influence in Eastern Europe. The acquisition of Vilnius gave the Russians an opportunity to appear magnanimous for they, in turn, gave a portion of the Vilnius Territory back to Lithuania.

Before the transfer of this portion of the Vilnius Territory was made, however, the Lithuanians had extended a sympathetic hand of aid to Poland. Her doors had been flung open to receive the refugees and the retreating soldiers. Lithuania was painfully correct in all details regarding the reception and care of these soldiers for she desired so earnestly to observe the recognized international law and agreements. She was most anxious that her own safety should not be jeopardized.

Lithuanian representatives had ventured, in October, 1939, to Moscow in high hopes and with firm determination. In Moscow, however, they were treated to the unmistakable evidence of German duplicity for Herr Hitler had promised Stalin his way in the Baltics. In 1941, when Germany swept into the countries of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, her spokesmen admitted as much when they referred to Germany having erred in the policy of Russian appeasement by allowing her sway in regions where German influence was withdrawn. There was very little else to do for the Lithuanian delegation in Moscow in October, 1939, than to sign the Pact of Mutual Assistance. Some of the delegation honestly believed that friendship with Russia was better than no friendship with anyone.

The Russians had injected a joker into the Pact of Mutual Assistance. They asked that Russian troops should be garrisoned in Lithuania. Since the only enemy strong enough to attack both Russia and Lithuania at the same time was Germany, the Lithuanians objected strenuously to this proviso but Stalin was firm. The Lithuanians should receive the choice share of the Vilnius Territory including the capital city. Had not the Russians deeded them this land in the original treaty of 1920 and reaffirmed it in later agreements? The Lithuanians finally accepted the gift of Vil-

nius and the gift of the Trojan Horse garrisons. The garrisons were located at four points between Kaunas and Vilnius.

The return of Vilnius to Lithuania was received with mixed emotions. Some of the sober Lithuanian thinkers saw a bad sign in the seeming friendship of Russia. They reasoned that nothing good could possibly come from the land of Red Bolshevism. Others reasoned that Lithuania was fortunate in having as her friend this "democratic" nation who had "taught Germany all she knew of military affairs and led the world towards real brotherhood and real democracy." Still others reasoned, "Well, we have Vilnius, so what?"

No one knew exactly what to do with it. During the fall, winter and spring which followed, the Lithuanians discovered that the population of the city of Vilnius was quite sullenly hostile. The people were largely of Polish mixtures, with a large number of Jews and countless refugees hidden away in every conceivable place. The city was a sore spot. It was necessary for the government to treat it much as a doctor would treat a sick patient. While waiting for the "cure," the Lithuanian government decided that Kaunas would remain the capital city and the Vilnius Territory would be administered as a Territory. Mr. Bizauskas was named Governor. Sober Lithuanians shook their heads and said: "Why didn't they return Svencionys?" Surely this city in the northern part of the Vilnius strip was more Lithuanian than any other. The Russians, however, expressed a need for this strategic city and would not consent to its inclusion even though the railway line ran by the outskirts. (After absorbing Lithuania by vote in 1940, the Russians added some territory around Svencionys and Druskininkai).

In the main, the Lithuanians felt relieved that their capital city and a portion of its district had been returned. They sought desperately to cultivate friendly relations with their new ally and to treat the Russian soldiers with every courtesy. In all frankness to the Lithuanians, it seemed to a neutral observer that they did more than their share in observing strictly to every clause of the agreement. The claims that were set forth by the Russians in which they charged laxity, during the spring and summer of 1940, were absolutely unjustified.

Meanwhile, the Lithuanian nation was busy at the Herculean task of feeding the thousands of refugees and of cleaning

up the newly acquired District of Vilnius. American, British and Polish aid was forthcoming through various channels to aid directly in the work of feeding and caring for the refugees plus the war stricken population of the District. Lithuania matched all donations and directed the work. Some effort was expended in rehabilitating the people although certain elements within Lithuania took the attitude that people should be temporarily harbored within the country while awaiting their eventual return to their original homes. They adopted a long range view that certain Poles and Jews would fare better when they eventually could return to Warsaw and the other points from whence they had come.

The Lithuanian students undertook to visit Vilnius as often as possible in order that they might become better acquainted with their capital city of ancient fame. The government reopened the University of Vilnius as a Lithuanian institution and operated it as a part of the Greater Lithuanian University in conjunction with the school at Kaunas. Many of the Polish Professors and docents were retired since they could not use the Lithuanian language.

A rather grievous situation developed within the Church. It will be recalled that the Vilnius Diocese had been considered Polish by the Vatican. There was no indication forthcoming from the Holy See that this attitude had changed because of the return of the District to Lithuania. The Polish Archbishop Jalbzykowski hated the Lithuanians and quite outspokenly criticized them. He referred to the Lithuanian priests as "political adventurers" and refused to appoint them to Vilnius Churches.

The condition grew steadily worse when the students gathered on Sundays in the old Churches of Vilnius and demonstrated whenever the Polish language was used. Priests would leave the Churches when groups of Lithuanians broke up the mass by lustily singing Lithuanian songs to overcome the Polish sermon. The situation was especially bad during April and May of 1940. Many Catholics were shamed by the travesty.

The student who desires a full explanation of the legal questions involved in the original Vilnius Dispute are referred to a book entitled "The Vilna Question, Consultations of Lapradelle, Le Fur and Andre Mandelstam," printed in 1929 at London by Hazell, Watson and Viney, Ltd. The Lithuanian government through their Envoy to Paris, Mr. Klimas, posed this question to the three

eminent international legal experts: "In law and equity, is the Government of Lithuania bound by the decision of the Conference of Ambassadors of March 15, 1923, concerning the frontiers between Poland and Lithuania?" The three lawyers, Professors of International Law and members of the International Institute replied in the negative thus substantiating the Lithuanian position.

Detailed listing of the repeated efforts on the part of Lithuania to bring this dispute to an equitable solution is given. Also listed are the attempts of the League to force Poland into some reasonable line of procedure. The several lines, including the famous "Curzon Line" of December 8, 1919, are referred to with explanations of Polish violation of such lines of demarcation. Reference is made to the line suggested on Feb. 3, 1923 and the Lithuanian protest to this endless temporizing with evasion of the issue. On March 15, 1923, the Conference of Ambassadors adopted a decision to transform the line of Feb. 3, 1923 into a final and definite boundary.

In conclusion, it might be pointed out that the Lithuanian government followed a very definite policy with regard to the whole Vilnius Problem. Their claim remains substantially the same, namely that all of the Vilnius Territory was and remains an integral part of Lithuania. Force sought to impose other solutions but the right remains quite clear.

THE STORY OF KLAIPEDA (MEMEL)

Probably man will never know just how old the city of Klaipeda (Memel) really is. Its existence as a small fishing village and trading post in the days when the Phoenicians were peddling their wares is quite likely. Surely the small bay known to the Germans as the Kurisches Haff and to the Lithuanians as the Kursiu Marios was explored thoroughly by the Frisians and the Vikings. The Lithuanians speak of an ancient city by the name of Rusne. The location of this city is said to have been at the mouth of the Nemunas river. Suffice it to say here that the present outlet of the Nemunas today is at Memel where the waters after flowing through the Kursiu Marios empty into the Baltic Sea.

The little village took on an aspect of importance when the Teutonic Knights built their outpost fortress here in 1252 A. D. The knights had managed to bring permanent peace to most of the

Prussians who were closely related to the Lithuanians. They had pushed their way along the sea coast, hoping ultimately to make contact with the Livonian Order out of Riga. Such contact was never to be for the Lithuanians were far too strong and, in time, completely vanquished the knights in the first great Battle at Tannenberg. The Lithuanian knights, on one occasion, took the fortress at Memel and destroyed it before leaving.

In the course of time, the German nation held on to the territory and completely utilized it. Their learning and religion were inculcated into the minds of the Memellander. The advanced Memelland student studied in German universities. The young men took their place in the German army. I point out these things to show how these people, who were originally of Lithuanian stock, were partially Germanized. The only Lithuanian evidence that could be discovered in the Territory in 1918 was found in rural communities close to the border where some traffic had been carried on with such Lithuanian towns as Taurage and Palanga.

The makers of the Versailles Treaty had thought of military strategy when they lopped off the territory from its time honored connection. Much was said about ethnography and ethnology but the territory became a French Mandate and General Odry was placed in the position of High Commissioner. The French considered it would make a point of vantage from whence French soldiers could push to meet the Poles if joint action was deemed necessary and advisable.

Little wonder that the Lithuanian diplomats had thoroughly studied the problem of Memel and the Memel Territory. If the Allied Powers were sincere in the matter and the Lithuanians actually thought they were, the logical disposition of the Territory was to the Lithuanian nation. They studied Article 99 of the Treaty. It read:

"Germany renounces, in favor of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers, all rights and title over the Territories included between the Baltic Sea, the Northeastern frontier of East Prussia as defined in Article 28 of Part II of the present Treaty and the former frontier between Germany and Russia. Germany agrees to accept the settlement made by the Principal Allied and Associated Powers in regard to these territories, particularly in so far as con-

cerns the nationality of the inhabitants." (Article 99 of the Versailles Treaty).

In the year 1922, the French High Commissioner, Mr. Petisne, noted that the Lutheran Memellanders were quietly minding their own business with little care for outside affairs. They took their wares to Tilsit whenever possible and enjoyed a status of economic independence. The rule of the French was light indeed.

The Lithuanians were not satisfied, and on January 10, 1923, advanced to take the Territory by force. Their diplomats had long and unsuccessfully sought to have their petitions recognized for a grant of this territory. Some thought they had waited too long. Others thought the present time was as good as any. Colonel Budrys was placed in command of the expedition. The movement was attended by delay at the border when some of the Lithuanians proposed to reconsider the whole adventure. A group of individuals within the Territory arose to ask for Lithuanian intervention.

The expedition soon reached the city of Memel and deployed throughout the Territory. The French garrison offered a brief, startled resistance though they had no heart in this struggle and the officers were a bit befuddled. Appeals to France brought further evidence of uncertainty. A British warship arrived at the waters outside of Memel and threatened to shell the city if the Lithuanians refused to withdraw. The Lithuanians called their bluff and won the day. Through the maze of bewilderment came the proposal that the Allied Powers would legally transfer the Territory if the Lithuanians would temporarily withdraw.

The Transfer Proposals which were not considered satisfactory by the Lithuanians but which served as a basis for discussion were as follows:

1. The Renunciation in favor of Lithuania of all right and title over the territory defined in Art. 99 of Treaty of June 28, 1919.
2. The establishment in the Memel territory of an autonomous government and popular representative, together with institutions officially recognizing the two languages in common use and respecting the principle of equality of all the inhabitants whatever their race, language or religion, as well as promising equality of treatment as between nationals and foreigners in the exercise of civil rights and in commerce.

3. Organization of freedom of sea, river and land transit, due regard being paid to the interest of the Lithuanian and Polish districts for which Memel is the natural outlet; the port of Memel to be placed under an economic administration, which will continue the development and which will provide every guarantee that the Lithuanian and Polish districts concerned will be given at Klaipeda (Memel) the necessary commercial facilities.

4. The Memel territory to refund, under the guarantee of Lithuania, the expenditure incurred on account of its administration and occupation and not yet recovered.

5. All goods and property situated in the territory and formerly belonging to the German Empire or to other German States to be transferred to Lithuania, or to the territory, provided that Lithuania takes over for herself and for the territory the charges laid down in Art. 254 & 256 of the Treaty of Versailles.

6. As soon as Lithuania accepts sovereignty of the Memel territory upon the foregoing conditions, the council of Ambassadors, with the assistance of representatives of Lithuania and of the territory concerned, to draw up at Paris an organic Statute for the Memel territory and conclude a convention with Lithuania in conformity with the present decisions.

It became clear, in the subsequent discussions, that the Allied Powers wished to effectively bind the hands of Lithuania in this matter of the Memel Territory. They were disposed to grant her the legal right of holding the Territory while imposing certain restrictions that would make exploitation absolutely impossible. For instance, they proposed to insure the absolute autonomy of the Territory. It should enjoy legislative, judicial, administrative and financial independence, within prescribed limits. The Lithuanian government should be represented by a Governor appointed by the Lithuanian President while the Territory should be represented in the Lithuanian Cabinet by a Minister of the Territory. The Lithuanian and German languages should have equal official recognition, the inhabitants should be equal before the law, there should be complete freedom of the press and the rights to free meetings should be enjoyed, etc. In other words, the Allied Powers sought to insure against any possible nationalism on the part of Lithuania that might breed future trouble with Germany.

The Lithuanians found special objection to this proposal: that

all the States whose commerce should pass through the Territory should be assured free passage. This would mean the Polish or Russian traffic and Lithuania proposed to regulate such traffic in her own way.

The Lithuanian government quite wisely refused to sign any agreement that would place upon her impossible regulations in the matter of conducting affairs within the District of Memel. Her representatives pointed out that whereas they were willing to accede to demands concerning the autonomy of the Territory, they wished to have such matters under proper respect to the sovereignty of Lithuania. The Council remained adamant and the Commission, headed by Davis, had a very difficult task but finally did devise the instruments known as the Memel Convention and Statute that were acceptable. To the student of international law, it would appear that incompetent handling of the whole matter laid the seeds of future discord.

The police power remained in German hands. Religious, economic and financial ties remained as before. The Germans were able to connive and disrupt by using the simple expedient of promising future punishment to all who did not remain "echte Deutsche."

It must be born in mind that France pursued a peculiar policy toward Lithuania until the Polish Marshal Pilsudski made his famous pact with Hitler. The French change came too late to benefit Lithuanian action in the Memel Territory. Mr. Massigly, political director of the French foreign office and chief author of the Statute, informed the Lithuanian Minister to France, Mr. Klimas, that France did not desire an effective Lithuanian control over the Territory.

The Klaipeda (Memel) Convention of 1924 (approved on May 17, 1924 and enforced August 25, 1925) guaranteed autonomy to the Territory. The Statute appended provided for the constitution of a Diet to which delegates should be elected in a free and secret election for a term of three years. It further provided for the appointment of a Governor by the President of Lithuania and prescribed as his duties: the promulgation of all laws passed by the Diet unless they are vetoed as being, in his estimation, in excess of the competence of the Diet, incompatible with the Lithuanian Constitution or inconsistent with Lithuania's international

obligations. The Governor was further obliged to convoke the Diet at the request of one third its membership. If not in agreement with the Directorate, he might dissolve the Diet in which case the new elections should take place within a period of six weeks.

Entrusted to the Directorate (composed of five members) was the real administration of the Territory excepting, of course, the national matters of defense, post, communications, etc. The Governor was to appoint a man who should occupy the position of President of the Directorate. This President would then appoint four other members to work together with him as the Directorate but the group must enjoy the full confidence of the Diet in order to hold office.

The agreement further stipulated that Lithuania should bind herself to conform to all provisions necessary to maintain the international character of the port of Memel. It was to be subject to the recommendation adopted at the Conference of Barcelona and its affairs administered by a Harbor Board composed of representatives (one each) from Lithuania, Memelland, and the League of Nations. The latter member would give special attention to matters of international concern. Since Lithuania was known to be in opposition to countenancing a Pole upon this Board, it was stipulated that the Representative from the League must be a national of some non-riparian State.

Minor points of the agreement that might be noted in passing are: the Lithuanian and German languages shall be considered on equal footing as official languages; the signatory powers are to interest themselves in the working out of the Convention and Statute; and the Permanent Court of International Justice is set up as an arbitration court for disputes that might arise.

To ask a Lithuanian politician to serve as Governor of the Memel Territory was almost the equivalent of asking him to commit political *hara kiri*. He was expected to perform the Herculean feat of trying to please the Memellander and the Lithuanian government at the same time. After the very first election, wherein the Memellander showed a distinct antipathy for anything Lithuanian, the labors of this office grew exceedingly more and more arduous. The Governor usually went into perpetual retirement behind the guarded doors of the Gubernatorial mansion in Klaipeda.

The Memellanders were not disposed to cooperate freely with the central Lithuanian government. Regardless of the fact that many considered themselves as direct descendants of the original Lithuanian stock which had been indigenous to the Territory from time immemorial and used the Lithuanian language fluently, they looked to Germany as their fatherland. They watched the proceedings quite carefully and fully realized their powers of obstruction under the final draft of the Convention and Statute. The fact that nearly all of the 140,000 inhabitants of the Territory were Lutheran made their ties with Lutheran Germany the stronger.

The German government had seen fit to mildly protest the transfer of the Territory to Lithuania. In a note of May 29, 1919, they had reminded the Allied Powers that the city and territory of Memel was predominantly German and suggested the establishment of a free harbor zone in which Poland and Lithuania could be accorded special privileges. The Allied Powers replied that the inhabitants of the Territory were predominantly Lithuanian and that the port of Memel was the only sea outlet for Lithuania.

By the terms of the Convention and Statute, the government of the Territory was to be democratic. The first election to the Diet was held in November of 1925. The results of this election were as follows:

The Lithuanian Party received a total of	2,501 votes
The Autonomy Union Party received a total of	536 votes
The Labor Party received a total of	539 votes
Various Lists received a total of	1,684 votes
The German Party received a total of	58,067 votes

63,327 of the 77,411 registered voters had cast their ballots electing 29 delegates of which 2 were Lithuanian and 27 were German. This result was, of course, quite disappointing to the central Lithuanian government. Other elections would bring better results but never were the Lithuanians able to elect more than 5 Lithuanian members to the Diet. Thus the die was cast for future trouble.

The Governor of the Memel Territory was required to promulgate such laws and edicts as were commensurate with his powers under the Convention and Statute. Naturally, the Governor was literally forced to serve as a mouthpiece of the central Kaunas government with very little personal responsibility. He could

veto measures that were, in his estimation, out of the jurisdiction of the Diet or inimical to the best interests and safety of the State. Many matters were thought contrary to the spirit of the Lithuanian Constitution and thus came under the veto. Time after time, the Governors found it necessary to remind the Memellanders that they should confine themselves to such matters as labor legislation, local taxation, social legislation, and keep their minds off matters that required the use of military force, the carrying of the mail, commerce and transport of the national order, etc. One can easily understand why there arose many difficulties between the two camps. I think it fair to say that the fault was equally divided with the Memellanders thinking of themselves as martyrs whereas the Lithuanians considered themselves outraged landowners whose tenants had been granted too large a portion of freedom.

It would be impossible to recount all the petty quarrels that arose under this highly impractical arrangement. It was a typical "allied power" mess and they sought to show their authority by promptly voting their "approval" of the Polish steal to Vilnius. Though this action infuriated the Lithuanians, they wisely concluded to bide their time while working Klaipeda (Memel) and its harbor into their National Economic Order. It was necessary to build proper facilities for the handling of products at the port. It was also necessary to deepen the harbor and provide for some Lithuanian activity on the Seas. In time, the Lithuanians purchased six cargo vessels of their own in addition to maintaining a small gunboat and a coast guard vessel.

The actual working out of the Convention and Statute showed a familiar pattern of election followed by conflict between the Governor and the Directorate which enjoyed the confidence of the Diet. At times, the Lithuanians sought to circumnavigate the usual procedure by doing without a Directorate. However, this was unconstitutional and brought stern warnings from the Allied Powers now in the League of Nations. One adverse decision was handed down by the Court of Permanent Justice at the Hague.

During the years 1925-1927, no less than three Directorates fell in quick succession. In February, 1927, the Governor sought to get along with a Directorate he quite arbitrarily chose after dissolving the Diet. Following a sharp objection addressed to the League of Nations by Germany, a new election was called for

August. In this election, the Lithuanian party obtained 4 of the 29 seats.

For a time, the relations between Lithuania and the Memel Territory were calm. This was partly due to the presence in the post of Prime Minister of Voldemaras who was known as a Germanophile. The introduction in 1930 of a high tariff on agricultural products marked for export to Germany caused an increase in tension.

Up to this time, the following Lithuanians occupied the post of Governor: Budrys, Zilius, Zalkauskas and Merkys. These men were followed, in order, by Gyls, Novakas, Kurkauskas and Kubilius. Of these eight Governors, Merkys and Novakas were known as strong men who made the relations quite strained by the hard measures enforced under martial law.

No one could deny that the affixing of the Memel Territory to Lithuania brought a tremendous economic surge to the Territory and especially to the city of Klaipeda (Memel). A great deal of building activity was occasioned by the new needs for handling the tremendously increased volume of goods shipped to and from the harbor.

Various individuals came to Klaipeda (Memel) while it was being modernized to meet the new role of Lithuania's only port. Workers were brought into the Territory to work at certain building projects. Administrators and others swelled the population. Certain merchants established offices in Klaipeda (Memel) to better conduct their various business enterprises. The Memellander did not look favorably on this influx of "strangers" into their land. They regarded the large Lithuanian Cooperatives as a particular menace and later, it was noted that they consistently refused to patronize the modern stores of Pienocentras and Parama because they considered it unpatriotic to do so even though better wares were offered for less money.

In August, 1930, the Klaipeda (Memel) District Diet was dissolved by Governor Merkys. In accordance with the Convention, announcements were made for the new elections which were held in October. The result of this election showed the Lithuanians received 5 out of the 29 seats in the new Diet. These results were, of course, disappointing to the Kaunas government. Governor Merkys appointed Herr Bottcher to choose a Directorate. This

Directorate received an immediate vote of confidence from the Diet.

In the year 1931, the Lithuanians were very suspicious of Herr Bottcher. This worthy made a visit to Berlin during the summer and it reached Lithuanian ears that his deeds and words were not in accord with the best interest of peace between Lithuania and her prime protectorate. Though he held the confidence of the Memel Diet, his term as President of the Directorate came to an abrupt close with his arrest on the charge that he had conspired against the safety of the Lithuanian State while in Germany.

It is well to remember that, during 1931 (May), Germany had registered a complaint with the League Council over the continuance of martial law within the Memel Territory. This matter was referred to the Allied Powers who addressed a stiff note to Lithuania (June 1931). Nothing came of it. Lithuania wondered why the Allied Powers continued to abuse her on this score of administration.

In February, 1932, the Governor appointed an entirely Lithuanian Directorate. On a new complaint by Germany, the League council addressed a note to Lithuania stressing the need of conforming with the Memel Convention and Statute with regard to the Directorate enjoying the confidence of the Diet. The League Council seemed content to "pass the buck" to the Allied Powers.

A new Directorate was chosen by a Lithuanian named M. Simaitis but the Diet promptly voted no confidence and the Lithuanian Governor just as promptly dissolved the Diet. This action was taken on March 22, 1932, despite the warning of the Allied Powers (who evidently had little heart for this extended quarreling). They did, however, bring charges on April 11 before the Hague Court. The resultant ruling seems innocuous and inane. It illustrates (if illustration were needed) the incompetence of such a Court to deal with international quarrels. Its ruling served to warn the Lithuanian nation against advising its Governors to promptly dissolve the Diet and rather advised that other Appointees to the post of President of the Directorates should be tried. (See Series A No. 49, page 337 of "The Permanent Court of International Justice.") This ruling was given in August, 1932 and in the meantime new elections had been held in May. The May

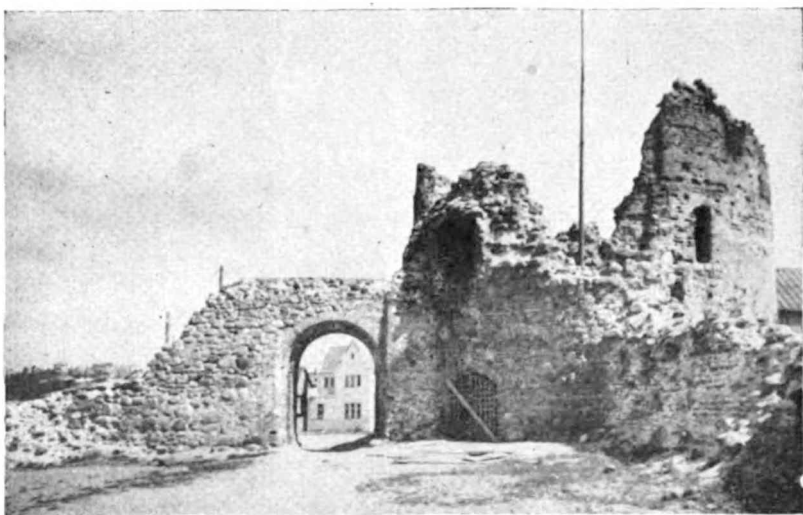
1932 elections resulted in the Lithuanians securing their five out of 29 seats so they gained no advantage. The elections had given the Germans of the Territory an opportunity to charge the Lithuanians with shameless manipulation of the voting procedure, and conditions worsened.

Governor Gylys succeeded Governor Merkys after these elections and, in August, the Financial Agreement between Lithuania and the Memel Territory was reached. It was duly signed on August 18, 1932. Governor Gylys, a liberal minded Lithuanian, appointed Dr. Schreiber to head the new Directorate.

January 1933 is a date for the world to long remember since it marked the advent of Herr Hitler to power. With the rise of National Socialism in Germany and the consistent barkings against the Versailles Treaty, the temper of the Territory gradually crystallized to an even more adamant degree.

The Nazis didn't waste any time. They organized two parties during the summer of 1933. The first was led by a Lutheran pastor, the Rev. Dr. Von Sass. It was known as the (prepare yourself for an ear splitting German title) "Christliche-Sozialistische Arbeitsgemeinschaft." We shall refer to it as the CSA party. The second was headed by Dr. Neumann and was known as the "Sozialistische Volksorganization." This party shall be referred to as the Sovog party. The Lithuanian government was quite aware of this new peril but could do very little about it. A drastic decision to use strong arm methods was made. In November 1933, a new Governor was appointed to take care of the new situation. He was able and alert though inclined to be harsh and intemperate. Governor Novakas was instructed to suppress these anti-Lithuanian movements. He did.

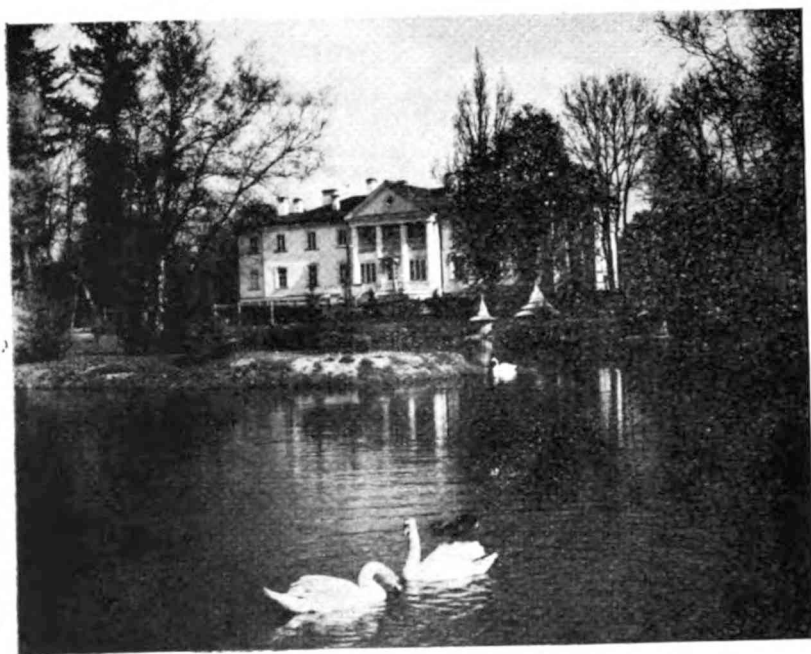
The continued use of martial law was effective but hurt the Lithuanian cause. The Memellander felt that his rights were jeopardized by the use of the military court. In March, 1934, a Lithuanian official by the name of Jurgis Jesutis was found murdered. Tension immediately arose when "strong man Novakas" went promptly into action. Various arrests were made following the enactment of a special Lithuanian law labeled for "The Defense of the State." This law was passed on February 8, 1934. It provided for the punishment of all persons found guilty of membership in organizations considered seditious or dangerous. The CSA and the Sovog were dissolved by gubernatorial order.



Ruins of a Castle in Kaunas



Lithuanian Department of Justice, Kaunas.



Manor House and Park in Lithuania



Department of Foreign Ministry

A serious attempt was now made by the Lithuanian authorities through its Governor to cure the Diet situation in the Territory. In June, 1934, Novakas dismissed Dr. Schreiber on the charge that he belonged to a seditious organization. Mr. Reizgis was also asked to resign. Various members of the Diet were accused of holding a membership in one of the two seditious organizations and were disqualified. Novakas, further, advised all Lithuanian members of the Diet to abstain from attending quorum calls so that no vote could be legally cast. The condition was quite serious. Mr. Bruvelaitis was asked to form a Directorate but found it was impossible.

On December 14, 1934, the trial of the 122 alleged Nazi agents had been opened in Memel. A mass of evidence was introduced purporting to show that certain individuals were guilty of espionage against Lithuania. Four of the men were accused of having murdered Jurgis Jesutis. The trials continued through February, 1935. In March, the sentences were pronounced, despite the severe pressure from Germany.

The four men convicted of the murder of Jurgis Jesutis were Walter Priess, Ewald Boll, Emil Lepa, and Henrich Wannagat. They were sentenced to death by shooting (later commuted to life imprisonment).

Johann Wallat and Ernest Wallat were sentenced to life imprisonment for the attempt on the life of Wilhelm Loops.

Sentences of ten years imprisonment were meted to Dr. Ernest Neumann and Willy Bertuleit (two of the leaders who were to become troublesome in 1939), Paul Kwanka, Paul Brokoff, Kurt Gran, Ernst Rademacher, Erich Lappins, Bruno Riegel, Kurt Haack, Fritz Kurhn and Fritz Scheschkewitz.

Sentences of eight years were imposed upon the Reverend Theodore von Sass and his adjutant, Hans der Ropp. Others receiving this sentence were Martin Freitksch, Konrad von Dre-seler, and Dr. Herbert Boetscher.

Note: All persons convicted of felonies lost their property through confiscation.

In March of 1935, Mr. Eden and Mr. John Simon of England visited Herr Hitler in Berlin and on April 19th they despatched a note (signed by England, France and Italy) urging moderation of

policy towards the Memelland, an early convocation of the Diet and a proper possessing of its confidence. The Lithuanians had lost patience with the dawdling policy of the so called Allied Powers but replaced Dr. Novakas with the more genial M. Kurkauskas. The three year term of the Diet expired in May, 1935 and elections were not called until September. On October 14th, 1935, the results were announced. They were as follows: 55,716 had voted for the German party deputies and 12,925 had voted for the Lithuanian party deputies. The new electoral law had been drawn up to deprive the Germans of voting for any "Einheitsliste" and disenfranchised a considerable number of voters.

The voting had been influenced, however, by Herr Hitler's violent denunciations before the German Reichstag on September 15th and the results showed that the Germans received 24 seats to the proverbial five for the Lithuanians of the Territory. It must also be remembered that on March 25, 1935, Herr Hitler had asked for the following concessions:

- 1)—Complete military equality.
- 2)—An increase in naval requirements.
- 3)—The return of German colonies.
- 4)—Sovereignty over traffic on German waters.
- 5)—A plebiscite in the Memel Territory.
- 6)—A plebiscite in Austria.

The British Appeasement program had begun to operate and Lithuania was at a loss to know exactly where she might be left holding the bag. Too much criticism should not be leveled at this small country which was desperately seeking to find an equitable solution to her dual problems: Memel and Vilnius. The Lithuanian President, Mr. Antanas Smetona made a measured and wise reply to the angry outburst of Herr Hitler on September 15, 1935. He said "The Memel Territory is not large but it is to us an economic necessity. We are too small a country to engage in counter propaganda. Our only point is that Memel, containing Lithuania's only seaport, is an essential part of Lithuania and the freedom and preservation of Lithuania is to her people a precious thing."

In the Treaty of Cooperation, ratified by the three Baltic States at Riga on November 3, 1934, it was agreed: 1) To confer with each other on matters pertaining to Foreign Policy and provide mutual assistance when one or all three were involved; 2) That the

two special problems of Lithuania, namely Vilnius and Memel, should be excluded from consideration. In January, 1935, a Bureau was set up to formulate methods for closer cultural cooperation. It is well to keep in mind the position of Lithuania who was obliged to go alone with her grievous problems of which no other nation would have a part.

The appointment of Mr. Kurkauskas was the signal for a milder policy towards the Memellander. The elections were held in September and the Lithuanians had their five seats and no more. Two attempts were made to form Lithuanian Directorates without success and finally Mr. Baldzius was asked by Governor Kurkauskas to form a Directorate. This group received an immediate vote of confidence. On September 25, 1935, the Lithuanian Foreign Minister, Mr. Lozoraitis, gave a solemn declaration that the rights of the Memellander would be respected and they took immediate advantage of the leniency. In December, 1935, a number of anti-Nazi measures were repealed. Several officials who had been dismissed on charges of their being pro-Nazi were reinstated.

In January, 1936, Mr. Baldzius was replaced by Mr. Diomons. The governing of the Territory went along more smoothly during 1936 with an apparent desire on the part of Germany to normalize the relations with Lithuania in every respect. This move was made on the part of the German representatives who had the certain knowledge of huge sums of money being spent to arouse the Memellanders. In addition to this, the German minorities everywhere were being encouraged by the motherland. They were being assured that "der tag" was not far away. The new Trade Agreement was signed by Lithuania and Germany on August 5, 1936.

In October, 1936, Governor Kurkauskas was replaced by a Kaunas attorney, Mr. Kubilius, who, to this time, had taken very little part in political life. He proved a happy choice for he kept to his mansion in Memel and sought to understand the Memellander.

On November 26, 1936, Governor Kubilius asked Mr. Baldzius to act as President of the Directorate. All went well within the Territory until, in 1937, when the Kaunas government passed a Police Power measure to make possible their appropriating, for a just

sum, any properties deemed necessary for national defense. Mr. Balzcius immediately announced that his Directorate was opposed to such a measure and found it inimical to the interests of the Territory and in opposition to the Convention and Statute.

The German government ordered its Envoy at Kaunas to lodge a protest with the Lithuanian government. He was assured that the Lithuanian government had only the announced purpose in mind, but the protest served to deter the move.

During the year 1937, some 844,700 net registered tons of shipping entered the port of Memel. Of this total, 294,400 tons were German, 150,000 tons were Swedish and 145,800 tons were British. Of the industries in Lithuania, one out of every four worked in Memel. The enterprises were cellulose factories, sawmills, veneer works, chemical establishments, textile works, tobacco factories, etc. The above quite aptly illustrates the importance of the city of Memel to Lithuania.

The Lithuanian central government had heeded the veiled warnings of the German press which loudly heralded certain allegations that the Kaunas authorities had contemplated the reorganization of the Lithuanian army under Soviet officers and had received large shipment of arms from Russia. Another charge was to the effect that Russian engineers had been at work constructing a huge underground air-drome in northern Lithuania.

In the fall of 1937 a minor crisis was passed in Memel, but the situation continued to develop along lines which became very difficult for the central government of Lithuania. It was growing quite clear that Germany was strong and quite willing to force certain issues. One of them appeared to be the Memel question. Lithuanians felt powerless to stop the development of Nazism in the Territory. Two leaders were prominent, namely Dr. Neumann and Willy Bertuleit. Throughout 1938, they swaggered and organized.

The story of the agreement whereby Memelland was returned by Lithuania to the Third Reich is told elsewhere in this book. It was not an easy thing for Lithuania to do for it meant a complete rearrangement of her economy. It meant a tremendous loss to her national system and a shock to her civilians who had come to regard the port of Memel as essential to the national well being. There seemed no alternative, once the issue was raised. The

action did, perhaps, forestall the absorption of Lithuania in September, 1939 when the two "Allies" were dismembering Poland. At best, it gave Lithuania a respite of less than a year for in the middle of June, 1940, the Russians were swarming over the country in peaceful conquest.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THUMBNAIL SKETCHES OF GREAT LITHUANIAN LEADERS

ANTANAS SMETONA

Antanas Smetona was born on August 10, 1874 in the village of Uzulenis. This village is in the parish of Vadokliai, county of Taurienai and district of Ukmerge. His father, Jonas Smetona, was a farmer so it can rightly be said of Smetona that, like Abraham Lincoln and many other great American leaders, he was a true son of the soil. Not born to wealth and affluence, he escaped their vices and missed the opportunities of an easy education. However, he would not be denied and conscientiously pursued courses of study in schools at Taurienai, Palanga and Jelgava (Mitau). It was at the school in Jelgava that he evidenced his burning desire to further the cause of Lithuania. Together with other students, he enjoyed the discussions within a secret society known as the "Kudikis." These students had vowed to remain in Lithuania after their graduation in order that they might better work for the liberation of their beloved country. His activities along this patriotic line led to his expulsion in the year 1896. Two of his companions from this period were Dr. Jokantas and Mironas. In one of the lower classes was a young fiery patriot by the name of Juozas Tubelis who had the honor of being the first student expelled.

Antanas Smetona journeyed to St. Petersburg (later known as Petrograd and now Leningrad). Here he matriculated at the High School to finish his preparatory work and subsequently enrolled in the University where he studied law. The patriot was ever greater than the lawyer and he could not refrain from enlisting and encouraging students in the work of liberating Lithuania. Eventually he felt the knout of the Cossack's whip, was thrown into prison and finally came to Vilnius. The latter move was welcomed for he was again in his beloved Lithuania. He was allowed to return to Petrograd for examinations but in 1902 was imprisoned for two weeks for circulating Lithuanian literature.

On his return to Vilnius, he worked as a lawyer's assistant. He received a great deal of valuable advice and training from Mr. Vileisis and busied himself with translating certain books into the Lithuanian language. Early in 1903, he entered the Lithuanian Noble's Land Bank and shortly thereafter he married Miss Sofija

Chodakauskaite, a refined and cultured daughter of an estate owner. The Smetona home became the center of Lithuanian cultural life in Vilnius. Dr. Basanavicius and other patriots were often seen entering this home for conferences with Smetona.

The Tsar of all the Russians and their captive peoples issued a decree in 1904 which ended the prohibition against Lithuanian printing that had lasted for forty long years. Immediately a deluge of good literature flooded into eager Lithuanian homes. Mr. Smetona was a busy contributor. His weekly paper "The Lithuanian Farmer" showed that he had not lost touch with realities nor had his patriotism been dimmed by any decree of the Russians. Another paper soon made its appearance and was known as "The Vilnius News." Smetona was carefully inserting news items calculated to stir up the desires of Lithuanians for eventual freedom from the Russian tyranny. In 1905, a great Lithuanian Diet was convened to publicly proclaim the desire of Lithuanians to enjoy self government.

In the columns of "The Hope" (Viltis), Mr. Smetona urged his compatriots to unite in their great effort. He himself was a member of the Democratic party but was conscious of the various other groups finding candidates amongst the Lithuanians and no less desirous of freeing their country. Still another publication was the "Vairas" which means The Helm. Smetona demonstrated that he was an able stylist as well as a most persistent patriot.

In the years that followed, Smetona was interested in the establishment of various cultural organizations such as "The Lithuanian Scientific Society" and "The Lithuanian Art Society." He also taught a year in the Lithuanian advanced school at Vilnius. He was interested in many things that he considered vital to the welfare of his country and people. He was accused of being too broadminded, that is of being able to join with workers and the Christian democratic party at the same time. This "middle of the road" attitude was considered dangerous by some critics who said he couldn't be trusted since he could swing either way. A typical utterance was: "The hour has now come for all currents to flow in a single channel and to show national independence."

During the war period, he worked together with Dr. Martinas Ycas, Lithuanian patriot and member of the Russian Duma, in a Committee charged with the relief of War Victims. Later, Dr. Ycas followed the Russian retreat into Russia leaving Mr. Smetona in

charge of the work at Vilnius which was occupied by the German troops. The work continued in spite of the rigors of the German occupation.

It was during this period of German occupation that Smetona enlarged his demands for Lithuanian freedom and encouraged a general movement amongst Lithuanians. For his activities, he was jailed by the German authorities. The movement for emancipation was undertaken by the Vilnius Lithuanian Committee which worked in conjunction with the patriotic group headed by Ycas in Petrograd. In 1916, the Vilnius Committee sent a detailed review of Lithuanian history to President Wilson together with their declaration of the Lithuanian desire for freedom.

Being constantly importuned by the patriots, the German occupation command consented reluctantly to the formation of a representative body. Since elections were barred the Lithuanians were forced to employ their own ingenious methods. On Sept. 18, 1917, some 264 representatives from various Lithuanian districts assembled at their traditional capital city of Vilnius in solemn Diet (Seimas) session and chose a Council (Taryba) to temporarily represent their national interests. Mr. Smetona was promptly and unanimously chosen President of this Taryba.

The German occupation was still very much of a force to reckon with and the demands of the Lithuanian Taryba went unheeded for the most part. The Germans preferred to smile at the freedom antics of these people and the severe requisitioning went on. Let it be said that the Taryba did not give ground on a single principle and watched carefully lest anything go by without a protest. They immediately sensed the threat of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and promptly on February 16, 1918 proclaimed Lithuania a free and independent State with its capital at Vilnius. President Smetona had shortly before tendered a lengthy report to the German government in Berlin concerning the right of Lithuania to enjoy the fruits and responsibilities of complete independence. The Germans had suggested a Prince for the throne of Lithuania in the person of Herzog Von Urach, a nobody from Wurtemberg, but the proposal was temporized by the wily Lithuanian Taryba. The German Kaiser, on March 23, 1918, recognized Lithuanian independence and this action, though predicated on the assumption that a German Prince might be called Mindaugas II, nevertheless set the stage for the eventual assumption of complete independ-

ence when the Armistice bell tolled the news of the Allied Victory, in November, 1918.

In the autumn of 1918, the Lithuanian patriots adopted their provisional Constitution and formed their first Cabinet of Ministers. The new government negotiated a loan from Germany of a hundred million marks with which to buy necessary arms and ammunition to fight the Bolshevik who almost immediately attacked, as well as various machines and materials with which to start the national economy.

On April 4, 1919, the State Council elected Mr. Antanas Smetona President of the Republic of Lithuania. In this capacity, he served during the trying years of 1919-1920. He had witnessed the success of Lithuanian arms against the hordes of Bolsheviks, the unbalanced Poles and the army of Col. Bermond. In the year 1920, various political groups showed their strength and Mr. Stulginskis became President. Smetona continued in the service of his country assisting in the fixation of the Latvian-Lithuanian border and, in 1923, serving as Envoy to the Klaipeda Territory. Later, he was busy with his writing and lecturing at the University of Vytautas the Great.

In 1926, the opportunity presented itself for a coup d'état. Smetona again was chosen President and continued in office until the second Russian invasion of 1940 when he was forced to flee to the United States where he immediately took up the cause of Lithuanian liberty.

FATHER MIRONAS

He was a Roman Catholic priest who had the best interests of Lithuania at heart and who played a singular role in its restoration period. It is to be noted that Father Mironas as a member of the original Taryba signed the Lithuanian declaration of Independence.

Father Mironas was born on June 22, 1880 at Panemunis in the District of Rokiskis. His father was a well to do farmer of the middle class. The young Mironas attended school at Jelgava where he met Antanas Smetona. Together with Smetona, Mironas was ejected from the school since he refused to attend the morning chapel which was conducted in the Russian language. Mironas went on to school, however, finally finishing the course in Priests Seminary at Vilnius and advancing to the Theological Academy in St. Petersburg.

His first assignment seems to have been as a teaching priest in private schools at Vilnius. He learned to detest the Polish spirit of superiority and felt an ever growing urge to spur his Lithuanian compatriots to rise from their place of inferiority. He knew that their greatest need lay in bringing about better social conditions. He organized the Lithuanian servants into a union which would have a better bargaining power. He also worked to wake up the Lithuanian clergy to the needs of the day, namely a consciousness of Lithuanian nationality.

His activities were noted by the Polish clergy who soon had him removed to an assignment at Daugai. Here he remained until 1918 when Lithuania was pronounced free and independent. During the period of German occupation, Father Mironas had served consistently in the cause of restoring to Lithuania her freedom. He was a close friend of the Smetona family which was also very active. Father Mironas was possessed of a winning personality and had many friends amongst the German Occupational Administration staff. This made it easier to work without undue restraint in getting pro-Lithuanian propaganda into the hands of the Lithuanian peasants.

At the village of Daugai, it is related that not only Christians came to him for advice but that also the Jews sought his counsel in preference to their own Rabbis. He urged Lithuanians and Jews to resist the Russians. Mironas is considered one of the original

patriots and leaders of Lithuania since he was active before the actual proclamation date.

Father Mironas was quickly named Supreme Military Chaplain and stationed at Kaunas. Here he was able to calmly observe the workings of the new government. He sensed the various impulses that drove his people to do this or that and warned when he thought it would be helpful. His engaging smile and tendency to over-imbibe at times, together with his reputed skill at cards, caused him to be regarded as a convivial fellow. However, when all is said and done, and deeds are weighed in the balance, all critics will have to admit that Father Mironas had something to give his country. He can justly be termed one of the great patriots and a brilliant guiding light through the dark and trouble filled days.

Father Mironas felt it his duty to work for a readjustment between Lithuania and the Roman hierarchy. He was also inclined to favor a rapprochement with the Poles.

The Mironas Cabinet was a weak Nationalist affair without change of direction and not entirely satisfactory to the people of Lithuania. Nothing outstanding was accomplished by his Cabinet and shortly after its dismissal, Mironas retired to his estate.

JUOZAS TUBELIS

Juozas Tubelis was born on April 18, 1882 at the village of Ilgalaukis in the Rokiskis District. At the age of fourteen, he established himself as one Lithuanian youngster who refused to pray in the Russian language. At this time, he was a student in the third class of the Mitau High School. Expelled forthwith from this school, he entered the school at Libau where he completed the preparatory course.

After one year in the Medical School of the University of Warsaw, he established himself at Panevezys where he engaged in secretly educating the Lithuanian peasantry. In 1904, he entered the Riga Polytechnic School to major in Agronomy, from which he received his degree in 1908. In 1905, he had engaged briefly in some journalistic activity, writing for the "Lithuanian Farmer" and "The Vilnius News."

His interest in Agronomy led him to seek employment on the estate of Prince Wasilchikoff near Jurbarkas, and later he engaged

in agricultural supervision in the Raseiniai Dist. It was here that he formulated worthwhile theories about land reform and division. Later this experience was put to very valuable use in the Lithuanian land reform.

Mr. Tubelis was employed in the Russian Army Commissariat during World War I. In the fall of 1915, when the Russians were withdrawing from Vilnius, he supplied many hungry Lithuanians with food from the Russian stores which had been assembled there. It was quite natural, therefore, that Mr. Tubelis should be appointed Minister of Agriculture and State Properties in the first Cabinet of Ministers on November 7, 1918. He held this position until June 19, 1920.

During the period from 1920 until 1929, while in the office of Prime Minister, he was very active in the establishment of the Lithuanian Cooperatives. Lietukis, Pienocentras and Maistas were literally lifted into being by this powerful economic leader.

He met and married Miss Jadviga Chodakauskaite to thus become the brother-in-law of Lithuania's First President, Mr. Smetona.

Like so many men who have a tremendous amount of nervous energy, Tubelis suffered from ill health. He was often sick and unable to attend to the duties of his office. Notwithstanding this handicap, he continuously filled Cabinet posts, directed the financial destinies of the little nation with an amazing skill and smiled through pain. A slight rest period in Switzerland seemed to guarantee a respite period in which to continue but his closest friends understood that he could not hope to live for many more months. It is perhaps a blessing in disguise that he was spared the pain of seeing the Bolsheviks overrun his beloved Lithuania.

Mme. Tubelis was a strong influence in the life of her husband and it can be said to his credit that he respected her firm and well founded advice. She has been referred to as "one of the best informed women of Europe." She showed rare courage when, as a firm Roman Catholic, she just as firmly advised against undue influence of the clergy in the political life of the country. She knew full well what a strange and deadly influence the See could have when the clergy dominated the political and economic life of a country. The examples of Spain, Italy and Poland were well known to her and she advised the leaders of Lithuania to resist any and all moves such as the Nuncio Bartolomi attempted.

Tubelis left a definite stamp upon the Lithuanian nation. He was a strong man of the government although not given to making lengthy speeches or even indulging in the shorter bursts of oratory. He worked best when quietly advising on financial or economic matters. His death in 1939 was a severe loss to the Lithuanian Republic.

ERNEST GALVANAUSKAS

One of the most colorful of Lithuanian characters was Ernest Galvanauskas. Born in Lithuania in 1886, he received a nominal amount of education under the Tsaristic regime. It is quite understandable that he should be in almost constant opposition to the Russian government since his views were distinctly socialistic. In 1905, he was actively engaged in the revolt against the hated system and dropped into the oblivion of exile. Galvanauskas seems to have employed his time very well since he showed a remarkable grasp of many vocations. Among them were: engineering, law, economics and finance.

Mr. Galvanauskas had returned to Lithuania at the end of the war. He traveled widely in the interest of Lithuania's independence struggle.

He joined the Lithuanian delegation at the Peace Conference in Paris and proved a very worthy member. It was largely through his industry and diplomatic skill that Lithuania fared so well. When Lithuania's place amongst nations was assured, Galvanauskas returned to Lithuania to enter active political life. He served more often as Prime Minister than any other Lithuanian leader.

Galvanauskas was a strange mixture of daring and reserve. He vociferously advocated various reforms within the country, actively prosecuted the forward moving program of internal construction and insisted on sound principles regulating finance and trade. His long period of voluntary retirement in Klaipeda (Memel) was marked by his urgent insistence on forward looking policies. He returned to Kaunas in her hour of need but found the interference of the Bolsheviks too much for his socialistic tendencies which seem to have been entirely reserved for Lithuania's good without benefit of the Russian bear. Late in 1940, he appeared a patient but disgusted patriot who mourned the Russian steal.

Mr. Galvanauskas was a man of great personal charm. He was an interesting conversationalist who could draw from a vast store of personal experiences. He had married a fascinating lady of French extraction and their home in Klaipeda was most pleasant. It was in this home that the writer spent many happy hours conversing and consulting with Mr. Galvanauskas on Lithuania's past, present and future.

MYKOLAS SLEZEVICIUS

The life of Mykolas Slezevicius is one quite replete with the things that make for interest. He was born in 1880 and was given a good education. In his early life, he joined other Lithuanian patriots to encourage an anti-Russian policy. He took to the principles of socialism from the time he was a student in the University. The belief in socialistic principles persisted throughout his life.

Though following the legal profession after graduating from the University of Odessa and proving himself very adept in the practice of law, he showed a keen interest in politics. It was as leader of the Populist party that he served his country in the capacity of Prime Minister.

During his first term as Prime Minister, he raised and equipped an army of volunteers which successfully advanced against the Russians and Poles. Since Lithuania started from scratch without the necessary worldly goods of a working democracy, his early experience ranks him with the miracle workers. The realistic Lithuanian leaders knew that Lithuania could depend only upon the wealth of her land and consequently urged all measures calculated on making the Lithuanian farmer stronger and more independent.

He took a firm stand against the encroachments of the priesthood. He had an inveterate distrust of all priests who had taken vows of obedience to the hierarchy of Rome. He urged that clergy keep to their religious knitting and leave the direction of the country to the better prepared politicians and patriots. He was sentimentally oblivious of the Russian danger, believing that the followers of Lenin and Stalin were to be preferred to the followers of Mussolini and Hitler. In 1926, he prepared the way for the

Smetona-Voldemaras coup d'état by negotiating a Treaty with Soviet Russia. On the occasion of his visit to Moscow, it is said that he was accorded a conqueror's welcome.

During the years following the coup of December, 1926, Mr. Slezevicius lived a quiet life. His legal practice increased steadily since he was considered a very able lawyer. In political circles he was still considered a leader of the Populist Party and did manage to offer some mild rebukes when dictatorship seemed too openly practiced.

He died in 1940, being spared the sight of the Bolshevik invasion. His idealistic conception of Russia was therefore never rudely shattered.

AUGUSTINAS VOLDEMARAS

Augustinas Voldemaras was a strange character. He seems to flit in and out of Lithuania's history like a ghost. His dark visage was foreboding. Together with Smetona and others, he was one of the original patriots of Lithuania in the dark and uncertain days. He seemed a natural choice as Prime Minister but quite quickly left the home scene to fight the diplomatic battles at Peace Conference tables. His knowledge of languages made him adept in diplomacy.

He returned to the head of the Lithuanian government in December, 1926 when a successful coup brought him together with Antanas Smetona to the helm. He gave to the country its first taste of real dictatorship. He quickly pointed out that Lithuania had only two things in common with Poland, namely, the Catholic religion and 525 kilometers of demarcation line. Neither of these things would make them forget their undying hatred of all things Polish. They wanted a return of their capital city Vilnius and proper Polish respect.

Voldemaras pursued a determined course. He organized a very aggressive unit which was named "The Iron Wolf." It must be noted, in all fairness to Voldemaras, that Lithuania gained perceptibly during his regime. He was drumming upon a responsive chord by appealing to the anti-Polish sentiments in the hearts of the young people.

Trouble with Smetona broke the ranks of Voldemaras and, following an unsuccessful attempt upon his life in the summer

of 1929, he was compelled to resign in the fall. Tubelis quickly took his place. Following an unsuccessful putsch, which almost worked, he was sentenced to serve a long term in prison during which he turned his thoughts to religious subjects. He received permission to live in France when amnesty delivered him from prison. Returning to Lithuania a broken man, he was taken to Russia in 1940. His friend Smetona fled to Germany, South America and the United States following the Russian steal of June-July 1940, while he reportedly languished in a political prison near Archangel together with Merkys and Urbsys. Voldemaras was advised by Lithuanian Envoys in Rome to remain there rather than be subjected to the perils of a possible Russian invasion.

DOMAS ZAUNIUS

Perhaps the most brilliant and capable leader of the Lithuanian nation was D. Zaunius. This great leader had a fine command of many languages and served a notably successful term as the Foreign Minister of Lithuania. Mr. Hambro, President of the Norwegian Storting and President of the League of Nations, rated him as one of the great diplomats of the post World War era. Mr. Zaunius spoke often and well in the council chambers of the League of Nations calling attention to their obvious inconsistencies and urging a stable and honest policy to insure the value of League decisions.

Mr. Zaunius continued to serve in the government following the coup of 1926. His greatest contributions were in the fields of diplomacy, economics and finance. He was serving as Director of Lithuania's Finance when death cut short his brilliant career in the winter of 1939-40.

The following list of Lithuania's greats is necessarily short because of space:

Sakenis, K.—served in various capacities. Conspicuous in later 30's as Pres. of the Seimas. He translated very ably the poem of A. Mickiewicz (Pan Tadeusz) into Lithuanian. Now deported to Siberia.

Grinius, K.—born 1866, graduated from the school of medicine at Moscow to become a journalist by choice, served as Prime Minister from 1920-1922 and as President of Lithuania from June 6, 1926 until deposed by the coup d'etat.

Bizauskas, K.—was a member of the Christian Democrat party. Served conspicuous roles in the Lithuanian Foreign Service. Became Vice Prime Minister in 1939. Served as Governor of the Vilnius Territory and proved a hero during the days of trial when negotiating for the best terms with ambitious Russia in the summer of 1940. He proved himself a man of great courage. His efforts with Bolshevik Russia were unsuccessful.

Vileisis, J.—served as the first Minister to the United States. A man of fine character and ability. He was a member of the State Council and known for his conservatism.

Ycas, Martinas—was one of the original patriots of Lithuania. A member of the Russian Duma, this gifted patriot was instrumental in giving good direction to the independence efforts. He was a member of the Reformed Church (Presbyterian). Mr. Ycas distinguished himself in the early years of Lithuania's restored independence by raising money to feed, care for and educate some 250,000 Lithuanian refugees of the first world war who found themselves stranded in Russia. He has written a three volume work entitled "Memoirs." He was born in 1880 and the flight from the Bolsheviks in 1940 made too great an exaction on his strength. He expired in South America while en route to the United States.

Gabrys—This Lithuanian patriot did much to encourage national thought. He published a study of Dr. V. Kudirka in 6 volumes. Much credit is due him for laying the groundwork of Lithuanian diplomacy.

Bistras, Dr. L.—leader of the majority party (Ch. Dem.) of Lithuania. Exiled to Russia.

From the army lists we get the name of General Rastikis who served as Commander-in-Chief of the Lithuanian forces. He was schooled in Germany and held in high repute by all foreign Military Attaches who served in Lithuania. He brought the army to a high point of efficiency.

Another army General who rendered outstanding service to the Lithuanian armed service was Air General Gustaitis. Skillful in building airplanes, Gustaitis built up an admirable air force entirely equipped with home made planes. He was arrested and killed by Bolsheviks in 1940.

The student of Lithuanian history will undoubtedly recall many other illustrious names that deserve inclusion in any list that might be prepared. Let this suffice only as an introduction to some of Lithuania's modern day heroes. There is always a list of unsung heroes in every country and, as fate would have it, many contribute even more than those who occupy positions of great acclaim.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND COMMERCE OF LITHUANIA.

For a time following the declaration of Independence on February 16, 1918, the Lithuanians continued to use the prevailing scale of weights and measures which had been introduced by the Russians. However, they quickly decided that it would be beneficial in dealing with the western part in Europe which already had adopted the metric system, to so correlate their own. The changeover was speedily effected.

To better acquaint ourselves with this system, let us review the main points of measurement.

For the measurement of distance:

10 millimeters equals 1 centimeter, 10 centimeters equals 1 decimeter, 10 decimeters equals 1 Meter (which equals 3.28 feet).

10 meters equals 1 dekameter,

10 dekameters equals 1 hectometer,

10 hectometers equals 1 kilometer.

Note that 1 kilometer equals approximately $\frac{5}{8}$ of a mile. 80 kilometers—50 miles.

1 Kilometer (which equals 0.621 miles)

For the measurement of land area we have:

10 centiares equals 1 deciare

10 deciares equals 1 are

10 ares equals 1 dekare

10 dekares equals 1 hectare

100 hectares equals 1 square kilometer of 0.386 square miles.

1 Hectare equals 2.47 acres.

For liquid measurement, we have the following:

10 milliliters equals 1 centiliter,

10 centiliters equals 1 deciliter.

10 deciliters equals 1 liter which is 1.056 quarts.

10 liters equals 1 dekaliter.

10 dekaliters equals 1 hectoliter.

10 hectoliters equals 1 kiloliter.

People purchase gasoline by liters or kilograms.

1 Kilogram equals 2.2 lbs.

To translate liters into gallons, multiply by .22
To translate kilometers into miles, multiply by .62137

This briefly recounts the essential points of the metric system.

In addition, we might say that the litas was pegged to the American gold dollar. 10 litas—1 Gold Dollar.

When our dollar was devalued to 59 cents, the exchange stood roughly 6 lits to the dollar.

The figures given, unless otherwise noted are taken from official Lithuanian sources. I would also direct the attention of the economic student to the very fine semi-official book entitled "Agriculture in Lithuania," by Dr. J. Kriksciunas.

Strictly speaking, Lithuania is a country lacking in rich black loam. Its soil is light and sandy. There are spots here and there where even the trees refuse to grow. With this relatively poor soil, the Lithuanians have wrought miracles. Bear in mind the long periods of slavery under the robber Barons who lived in luxury and ease with little interest in the improvement of their huge estates. During this long period, the Lithuanian peasant was required to bring forth fruits of the soil on various strips laid out from the nucleate villages where they existed. Through it all, the Lithuanian retained an intense love for this land that had been his from time immemorial.

There was no coal or iron in Lithuania. It lacked oil and other natural wealth so coveted by large powers in our day and age. It had the gold of the soil, however, and it had a people with gold in their soul for they held fast to religious tenets and were not afraid of hard work. When freedom's bell rang for them in 1918, they took their place in the fields and forest to repair damage wrought and to plant for future crops.

The new conditions called for currency stabilization. The rouble had persevered under the guidance of the Russian government until the year 1915. With the coming of the German soldiers in that year, many of the roubles found their way underground despite the efforts of the Germans to establish an Ostmark currency backed by the reclaimed roubles. The Lithuanians termed this East Mark, "the Auksinas," and one can find this term on some of the early issues of stamps. The Germans were successful in recovering some of the hidden roubles when they sold vodka

for gold only. Long queues formed, waiting for the opportunity of getting this liquid firewater, more precious, to many, than gold.

The Russians did a very interesting thing when they paid back some gold roubles to the Lithuanians by way of indemnities. It was, at best, but a trifling gesture on their part for the billions they had stolen from the Lithuanian people during their period of occupation from 1795-1915 A. D. It did serve as a foundation stone for the building of a conservative Lithuanian currency that until 1940 was to prove such a model and stable financial medium.

The Lithuanian peasant received a liberal amount of enlightened leadership during the formative period of development. These men were filled with a patriotism and a love for their fellow men. The Cooperative movement soon proved itself and became an ever increasing source of strength within the Lithuanian nation. Had it not been for this movement and the division of land, perhaps the growth of Communism within Lithuania would have been sizeable. However, we can appreciate this still further when we realize that three-fourths of the Lithuanian people lived upon the farm land and less than one-tenth of these rural people were of the renter class. The remaining nine-tenths of the farmers owned their farms and had every opportunity made possible for them by the government.

There have been arguments pro and con concerning the keen interest of the government in the farmer and some have contended that this interest often keeps valuable commodities from reaching the people simply because their importation means a direct loss (financially speaking).

For instance, if oranges were to be imported regularly and without restriction a serious drain would result. Doctors were urged to remind the people that carrots could be eaten raw with practically the same results obtaining. They continually urged the people of the country "to buy Lithuanian and use Lithuanian goods." They urged them to do without the unnecessary luxuries of life whenever possible and thus conserve the national wealth. In practice, it worked in Lithuania.

Lithuania was distinctly an agricultural country. She produced, in plenty, the simple food requirements for her people. It can be correctly stated that she approached the point of being self sufficient. Items of food that she imported in quantity were: her-

ring, salt, coffee, cocoa, tea, rice, and citrus fruits. Her good earth gave her an abundance of potatoes, cereal grains, flax and greens of various kinds. She possessed horses, cows and hogs in such abundance that she built a very fine export business of livestock and dressed meats. It has been said that the farmer can thrive on the staple diet of bread, bacon and sour milk with such supplementary foods as vegetables in season, native fruits, meats as desired and dairy products such as cheese, butter, etc.

Her greatest problem was the adjustment between the prices obtained by the farmer for his products and the prices of commodities that he could very well use in making his living more profitable and enjoyable. The sums paid to the farmer for the product of his toil were not large enough to allow for the purchase of very many manufactured goods. As a consequence, one observed in rural parts that the farmer very often made his own shoes, was clothed in homespun materials, and was denied many niceties in the home that made for more delightful living.

To bring about a better adjustment of these conditions, the cooperative societies bent every effort to decrease costs of production and increase the earning capacity of the farmers. The educational program was intense and the farmers were bound together in a tremendous organization. The government utilized every means to keep in close touch with their program.

In the summer of 1926, the Lithuanian government opened its first radio broadcasting station in Kaunas. It operated on a frequency of about 150 kilocycles and a wavelength of something like 2000 meters. This position on the radio receiver is termed the long wavelength zone. There were other frequencies ultimately used but this seems to have given the greatest efficiency of performance with the least possible interference. People were urged to buy radio receivers which were licensed.

The government radio service was quite complete and very much appreciated. It allowed for an approach to the people that otherwise would have been impossible. Programs included information talks, cultural courses with good music and complete news coverage. In time, a second broadcasting station was erected at Klaipeda (Memel) and a third at Babtai. A fourth station at Vilnius ultimately came into use for a short period of time following the return of the Vilnius territory in 1939.

It seems advisable, at this point, to inject a few facts and figures so that our conclusions can be more clearly drawn. Dr. Kriksciunas has included some very interesting facts in his work entitled "Agriculture in Lithuania," wherein he quotes government figures as follows:

- 1) Agricultural land, arable, ..2,735,900 hectares, 49% of total
- 2) Pasture land1,140,100 hectares, 20.5% of total
- 3) State Domain (forests),1,049,100 hectares, 18.8% of total
- 4) Swamp and Peat Bog, 156,100 hectares, 2.8% of total
- 5) Waste land, 485,800 hectares, 8.7% of total

The figures used are from the 1935 Official Reports.

In the matter of climatic variation, we find that Lithuania enjoys life in temperatures variant between —4 and 20 degrees Centigrade.* Growing seasons are comparatively short and rainfall is copious, as you will see from a following chart of rainfall. Frost resisting flora is therefore desirable.

Lithuania lies between 53.35 and 56.27 North latitude, and 20.57.5 and 26.26 East longitude Greenwich.

Follow the line around the upper part of a globe and you will see that Lithuania's line runs through North Scotland and through Canada by the Hudson Bay. With this northern position, the thought comes to us that Lithuania enjoys a rather harsh and cold climate. It is continental in one sense and its cold can be biting in quality. Seasons for growing crops are short and in some places the dews are so heavy that artificial drying is employed for some crops. To give the reader an idea of Lithuania's rainfall, the following chart is submitted. These figures have been prepared by the official weather bureaus located at the places indicated.

Month:	Klaipeda (in Lithuanian:)	Jelgava (figures in millimeters)	Mariampole
January	Sausis53	36	35
February	Vasaris41	36	26
March	Kovas37	33	31
April	Balandis38	35	37
May	Geguzis40	45	52
June	Birzelis49	70	71
July	Liepos62	82	83

* Between 38 degrees and 68 degrees Fahrenheit.

August	Rugpiutis	90	58	71
September	Rugsejis	30	48	41
October	Spalis	81	46	44
November	Lapkritis	62	46	33
December	Gruodis	61	43	26

Dr. Kriksciunas says: "The rainfall of Lithuania does not render the climate as humid as in Southern England or Holland, but does prevent droughts which cause such extensive damage in certain regions of Eastern and South Eastern Europe. In a narrow sense, it is not a climate conducive to the improvement of meadows and pasture lands, such as is found in the greater part of Great Britain, Holland and Northwestern Germany. It is not suitable for the production of cereal crops as the climate of Hungary, Roumania, Southern Russia and some other countries."

The fact remains that in this country, where four of every five inhabitants live on the land, the farmer is blessed with abundant crops.

Here is a comparative study of the years 1934 and 1937:

1934:

Rye sown on....495,580	hectares produced a crop of	668,835 metric tons.
Oats sown on....328,500	hectares produced a crop of	379,758 metric tons.
Wheat sown on..208,000	hectares produced a crop of	285,100 metric tons.
Clover sown on..367,700	hectares produced a crop of	1,046,576 metric tons.
Potatoes sown on 182,800	hectares produced a crop of	2,493,139 metric tons.
Barley sown on..203,600	hectares produced a crop of	253,929 metric tons.
Flax (seed) & Fibre	hectares produced a crop of	25,768 metric tons.
sown on60,740	hectares produced a crop of	21,679 metric tons.

1937:

Rye sown on....509,390	hectares produced a crop of	606,942 metric tons.
Oats sown on ..348,610	hectares produced a crop of	387,767 metric tons.
Wheat sown on 210,660	hectares produced a crop of	220,693 metric tons.
Clover sown on 344,730	hectares produced a crop of	826,810 metric tons.
Potatoes sown on 184,500	hectares produced a crop of	2,509,925 metric tons.
Barley sown on 214,000	hectares produced a crop of	273,987 metric tons.
Flax (seed)		
& Fibre sown on 88,270	hectares produced a crop of	66,927 metric tons.
Fodder Beets	hectares produced a crop of	1,301,766 metric tons.
sown on 58,250	hectares produced a crop of	1,041,372 metric tons.
Hay sown on569,860		

(Note that the Lithuanians produce approximately 1 metric ton of potatoes per capita.)

A populations study is as follows for the year:

1925: 2,169,863 men, women and children.

1930: 2,340,999

1935: 2,500,000

1940: 2,980,000 (with the Vilnius Territory.)

In the spring of 1940, following the loss of Memel and the acquisition of Vilnius, the 2,980,000 Lithuanians lived on 21,493 square miles of territory, the use of which we have just discussed.

Lithuania claimed an additional 10,000 square miles known as the Vilnius Territory but received only a part of this Territory as a gift from Russia in the fall of 1939 when the Russians were entertaining evil thoughts against the future security of the three Baltic States. Note the steady increase in the population figures in Lithuania. In fecundity of her women, Lithuania ranked second to Poland. No little credit is due the Catholic priests who urge family duty and devotion.

To obtain a more complete picture of Lithuania's neighbors in Eastern Europe, we submit the following figures (1935):

	sq. miles.	inhabitants	Density per sq. mile
Finland	149,926	3,634,047	24
Estonia	18,362	1,115,000	61
Latvia	25,000	1,900,000	76
Lithuania	21,493	2,500,000	110
Poland	149,958	30,737,448	205

Relative prosperity seems to run in the order given. Finland was able to not only balance her budget but could meet all payments due on outstanding obligations. Poland seemed to have the least prosperity with the greatest number of inhabitants. Some Poles lived in abject poverty. All powers listed above had an outlet on the Baltic Sea. Lithuania's only port was Memel which she had from 1923 to 1939 (March). Here passed most of the import and export trade of the country. By 1938, Lithuania had acquired a merchant marine of six vessels. She also maintained a large fleet of fishing vessels in addition to one gunboat and one patrol boat. The number of pleasure boats was not large since the Baltic Sea is not the most pleasant upon which to sail. Most pleasure craft were small sailboats which confined their runs to the inland sea known as the Kurische Haff.

By reviewing the Financial sheet of the Lithuanian government as of December, 1934, we can obtain an inside view of the story behind a part of their reconstruction effort. We see the following picture. There was still owing to Great Britain for war stores delivered at a time of need the sum of \$170,000.00. Also

owing, but for expenses in connection with the administration of the Klaipeda (Memel) Territory, \$5,000.00 to Britain and \$1,000,000.00 to France. Listed in a different category than inter-governmental loans were the following items: to the Swedish match trust for investments in connection with a match monopoly, the sum of \$4,500,000.00; to a Belgian concern for railway rails, \$500,000.00; to Danish firms for construction in the Klaipeda (Memel) harbor and for the Telsiai-Kretinga railway, the sum of \$83,000.00 and \$550,000.00 respectively; to a British firm for a telephone exchange in Kaunas and Memel \$150,000.00. In the category of short term loans we find listed such items as (1) for diesel engines to an Austrian firm, \$100,000.00; (2) to a Latvian firm for refrigerator trucks \$2,500.00; (3) to a Danish firm for freight trucks, \$1,800.00 and to a British firm (4) for postage stamps, \$5,000.00.

The total Lithuanian National Debt stood, in 1930, at 136,331,252 lits (\$22,000,000.00). Her trade figures with the United States were always relatively low since it was difficult for her to invade the markets where competition in foodstuffs is intense. The figures of Imports and Exports for 1933 read as follows for the year 1933:

Imports from the United States—\$192,602.00 mostly finished products, autos, etc. Exports to the United States: \$372,691.00 mostly wood pulp, meat products, etc.

The aid given by America was especially salutary during this early period of Lithuania's restored independence. Money and supplies poured in to aid the needy nation. The American Red Cross despatched supply busses and Colonel Ryan is still remembered as "the American friend in need." This officer of the American army whose fame lay in his humanitarian efforts, planted a rose by the tomb of Lithuania's unknown soldier. Years later the roses were still blooming. The Lithuanian General Nagevicius, who was charged with the maintenance of the Lithuanian War Museum was wont to speak his name reverently and tears of joy would come to his eyes. Truly, as General Nagevicius said, "America has built its most firm friendship on acts of kindness and never has American charity been excelled."

An interesting account is related dating from those early days. It appears that a celebration was held in honor of the visiting Red Cross Commission in one of the leading hotels of Kaunas. During the banquet, the band was ordered to strike up the various National Anthems. When they were to play the American

National Anthem they found that no music was on hand for the Star Spangled Banner and the musicians did not know the piece. After a brief conversation with the American guests of honor, the band played quite solemnly, as the Americans stood at attention, the old favorite "Yankee Doodle." It was the only American piece in their possession.

Another interesting account tells of an experience with some German troops who were returning home after the Armistice. The German spied the trucks bearing such Red Cross supplies as soap, razor kits, and food and promptly decided to raid the convoy. An adjutant of Colonel Ryan saved the day when he loudly addressed the Colonel with a high sounding German title which so thoroughly impressed the Germans that they saluted and withdrew.

General Nagevicius further tells the tale of how they procured needed medicaments by announcing a plague and rigging up various patients whom they said were suffering from cholera. It worked, and supplies came from the American depot at Riga.

America served Lithuania in still another way. Many Lithuanian Americans returned to their motherland to serve in the war of freedom and also to serve in the reconstruction effort. Many brought hard earned capital which they invested in much needed new industries. They brought a new enthusiasm to their beloved motherland. For many, it was comparatively easy for they knew the language and understood the people.

Some of the men had served in the American army and had been disabled in action. They preferred to go to Lithuania where their money seemed to work just a little longer. Becoming individuals with two nationalities, they received land and worked it with American capital. The Lithuanian government allowed them to receive this "compensation" money without criticism. In contrast to this treatment is the procedure of the Russian government. It is a fairly well authenticated story that emanates from Moscow to the effect that the Bolsheviks ordered the erstwhile American-Russian soldier to sign for his check and then gave him a few roubles for his share of the "Velvet money from Uncle Sam."

From America, Lithuania had received (and calculated with interest as of December, 1934) the sum of \$6,750,000.00 from the

United States Government and the sum of \$1,845,000.00 from Lithuanian Americans in a so called Liberty Loan. Total: \$8,595,000.00.

It must be said to the credit of this little Republic that she fully intended to repay her loans made in America. Great Britain and France, however, defaulted and then ordered Lithuania to join their ranks. Mr. Bizaruskas, Vice Prime Minister of Lithuania told me that his government had prepared a check for mailing when the British-French order came. They had sincerely wished to maintain their honest status but feared the possible retaliatory blows that might be dealt their export trade by England in case they refused to comply.

The Debt Question as far as we were concerned.

Regardless of the amounts that were paid back and without recourse to explanation as to what amounts were advanced in cash or, what is more valuable, in goods, the amounts owed directly to us in January, 1938, were in excess of these figures:

	Original loan interest	Sum repaid	Balance still due
Great Britain	4,600,000,000	2,024,000,000	2,575,000,000
France	4,025,000,000	486,000,000	3,538,000,000
Italy	2,042,000,000	100,000,000	1,941,000,000
Belgium	417,780,000	52,000,000	365,000,000
Poland	178,560,000	22,000,000	155,000,000
Czechoslovakia ...	115,000,000	20,000,000	94,000,000
Yugoslavia	62,850,000	2,000,000	60,000,000
Roumania	44,590,000	4,000,000	39,000,000
Estonia	13,830,000	1,000,000	12,000,000
Finland	9,000,000	6,000,000	3,000,000
Lithuania	6,030,000	1,000,000	4,000,000
Latvia	5,775,000	800,000	5,000,000
Hungary	1,939,000	939,000	1,000,000

A study of the Lithuanian national budget reveals the intense desire to keep it properly balanced. It follows:

Year	Revenues Lits	Expenditures Lits	Balance Lits
1923	166,300,000	166,000,000	300,000
1924	235,790,000	232,320,000	3,470,000
1925	245,220,000	255,820,000	10,600,000
1926	228,770,000	228,580,000	190,000
1927	258,300,000	229,750,000	28,550,000

1928	276,220,000	278,790,000	2,570,000
1929	293,790,000	267,690,000	26,100,000
1930	305,360,000	299,310,000	6,050,000
1931	315,090,000	335,300,000	20,210,000
1932	265,990,000	278,390,000	12,400,000
1933	250,220,000	249,660,000	560,000
1934	257,600,000	251,770,000	5,830,000
1935	260,360,000	276,880,000	16,520,000
1936	302,800,000	287,720,000	15,080,000
1937	329,900,000	318,200,000	11,700,000
1938	346,808,000	340,000,000	6,808,000

The port of Klaipeda (Memel) evidenced a growth of commerce between the years 1924 and 1937. Official statistics showed:

	In 1924	In 1937
Seagoing Vessels	694	1,414
River Boats	968	2,917
Goods handled	588,021	1,663,136
Imports tons:	294,611	968,987
Exports tons:	143,435	370,143

The Central Statistical Bureau of the Ministry of Finance in Lithuania has prepared an interesting picture of the major branches of industry in Lithuania (Date January 1, 1937): Production values are for 1936.

	No. of Industries	No. of Workers	Production values in lits
Food Products	342	5,120	89,274,000
Textiles	71	6,629	28,856,000
Clothing and Footwear ..	141	2,441	16,682,000
Metal and Machinery ..	90	2,393	15,213,000
Hides and Furs	49	892	13,332,000
Paper	71	2,365	12,292,000
Chemicals	45	1,279	11,187,000
Timber	158	3,329	9,807,000
Power	33	506	9,535,000
Earthenware and Stone..	27	893	4,624,000
Peat	3	37	955,000
Hygienic Trade	26	139	414,000
Totals	1,056	26,003	212,144,000

Of these, a considerable total was located at Klaipeda (Memel) which was occupied by Germany in March 1939. Though the Germans allowed the Lithuanian Government a small amount as compensation for their investments, the loss was a tremendous factor in slowing up the Lithuanian preparedness against aggression.

The government of Lithuania was forced to work without deposits of coal, iron and oil. It is therefore quite apparent that only certain industries could be carefully nourished and the progress would be slow. We turn to a detailed report of the export products which came from the good mother earth.

The following chart gives an idea of bulk shipments in the export trade (all figures are metric tons unless otherwise specified):

	Butter	Eggs	Flax & Tow	Linseed	Grain
1924 ..	524	3,993	14,047	18,637	24,965
1926 ..	1,747	3,472	19,732	25,762	16,541
1928 ..	2,642	3,502	13,176	6,993	12,309
1930 ..	7,356	2,958	10,198	20,123	40,664
1932 ..	9,925	2,462	8,989	7,709	7,034
1934 ..	9,671	1,046	10,186	6,401	25,504
1936 ..	14,629	3,792	19,677	23,807	162,023
1937 ..	15,058	4,228	16,087	20,678	5,795

In general, the exports for the years 1936

amounted to: 190,485,000 lits

The imports for this year was: 156,060,600 lits

The figure for the exporting of 1937 stood at: 208,325,000 lits

For importation, the Lithuanians spent a total of: 212,666,900 lits

A break down of the 1937 figure is as follows:

	Exports to (in lits)	Imports from (in lits)
Great Britain	96,581,300	59,314,500
Germany	34,479,300	46,380,900
U. S. S. R.	11,056,200	17,896,100
France	9,819,300	5,638,200
Holland	9,469,200	8,867,800
Belgium	7,771,700	16,749,600
Czechoslovakia	7,003,900	6,936,700
The U. S. of America ...	6,847,700	7,383,000
Sweden	4,690,000	6,986,100

The principal exports for the year 1937 can be listed as follows:

15,058 tons of Butter	41,384,700 lbs
15,573 " " Meat Products	31,126,600 "
23,508 " " Hogs & Livestock	25,032,600 "
15,728 " " Flax and Tow	23,905,300 "
153,613 " " Timber Materials	22,071,700 "
68,621 " " Wood Pulp	14,822,500 "
20,678 " " Linseed	7,069,500 "
1,723 " " Hides and Furs	6,133,700 "
6,250 " " Veneer	4,229,800 "
77,063,500 Eggs	5,922,900 "

(Figures are from the Lithuanian Consulate in New York City).

The principal imports for the year 1937 can be listed as follows:

61,478 tons of Iron and Steel	18,511,300 lbs
4,869 " " Machinery	13,390,800 "
1,175 " " Cotton Textiles	11,083,000 "
286,252 " " Coal	9,741,700 "
1,943 " " Cotton Yarn, etc.	8,558,000 "
624 " " Woolen Yarn, etc.	8,433,000 "
1,907 " " Motor Vehicles	7,863,600 "
96,838 " " Fertilizers	7,339,000 "
459 " " Instruments, etc.	7,163,500 "
29,753 " " Petroleum Products	6,471,500 "

It is to be remembered also that within figures listed as Machinery, Instruments, etc., are quantities of arms, for Lithuania was desperately seeking to be well armed. She hoped to fit herself so that, if trouble were forced upon her, she might defend herself.

The Lithuanian ships and foreign bottoms plying the Baltic Sea carried forth quantities of excellent mushrooms gathered from the floor of the Lithuanian forest, celluloids, hemp, veneered materials, and amber. The last mentioned material is quite peculiar to this part of the world and the demand for amber objects has not dimmed. Bringing necessary supplies to Lithuania via Memel, were returning ships with salt, pepper, herring, coffee, cocoa, rice, oranges, lemons, bananas, silk and cottons, yarn, paper, chemicals and various other things.

To deliver the goods of the nation to their seaways, Lithuania's Department of Communications engaged in a comprehensive building program. Kaunas was linked more directly with Klaipeda when the new Siauliai-Telsiai-Kretinga connection was built in 1932. Under the Russian rule, railways had been built through Lithuania, with a view to carrying traffic to Libau and Riga. They tended to radiate from points in old Russia such as Vilnius, Minsk, etc., and originally were of the antiquated Russian gauge, all of which demanded a rebuilding effort. By January 1935, there were 1,152 miles of railway in usable condition, of which about 800 miles was standard gauge. The main line from Tallinn to Berlin ran through Riga, Kaunas, and Koenigsberg.

An interesting note in the story of changing from the Russian (5 feet wide) to the standard gauge (4 feet 8½ inches) is told of the German army of occupation. Encountering the wide gauge line, the Germans promptly lined up hundreds of soldiers who were equipped with tools to loosen the track. At a given signal, the track was moved to its required position and fastened, a mile or so at the time.

It was therefore directly due to the German occupation that Lithuania inherited no Russian gauge railways, as was the case with Latvia and Estonia. It is to be noted that the Lithuanian government sought to modernize in every respect the existing system and to enlarge it in proportion to its earning capacity or prospective value to the transportation needs of the country.

In 1937, we find that there were 1,838 kilometers of standard gauge railway track over which traveled a total of 3,379,700 passengers and 2,075,200 tons of freight. The nation earned a railway revenue of 29,377,000 lits while expending a total of 28,708,000 lits. Government engineers sought to bring a more efficient service to all parts of the country. Their planning showed skill and good common sense. To augment the standard gauge were some 599 kilometers of narrow gauge railway which carried 292,500 passengers and 277,000 tons of freight. The cost of this transportation amounted to 3,968,400 lits against a revenue of 1,880,200 lits which showed a deficit of 2,088,200 lits. A large share of this deficit represented new equipment, however, as the railway directors had been compelled to compete with truck service.



The Lithuanian Postal Department in Kaunas



Sons of Free Lithuania parade in Kaunas.

For the truck and other automotive equipment, the government had constructed 1,247 kilometers of new highways on the former roadbeds largely damaged by war operations. The engineers also constructed 213 kilometers of absolutely new roads opening up new sections. By 1938, therefore, we find 2000 kilometers of first class highways in Lithuania. This system was augmented by 30,536 kilometers of fine graded local roads. The aim of the ten year road building plan was 700 kilometers of new road to cost an estimated 50,000,000 lits.

The government bought in Sweden some very fine and modern bus chassis on which they put modern bodies. They soon discovered that the direct competition of the bus with the train necessitated some bolstering of the latter and that the bus service proved burdensome to the upkeep of the highway system. However, the government was perfectly willing to carry on a thorough going experiment and was loath to discard any mode of transportation that could serve the people.

The Lithuanians also took to the air in a modest way. The ranking Air Chief was a master builder of aircraft and did put out some very fine jobs which were utilized for army training. Other units were purchased eventually and an air service from Kaunas to Palanga was inaugurated. It is interesting to note that during the crisis of 1940, the delegation that visited upon Comrade Stalin went to Moscow in the two modern air transports of the Lithuanian Line. Her pilots were able and Lithuania had purchased her planes with cash.

Perhaps the most colorful and economic mode of transportation within Lithuania was the river navigation. Small paddle river ships plied the waters of the Nemunas, Neris and other navigable streams. Excursions attracted a large number of people and many preferred to commute between Kaunas and Klaipeda by boat. The service was excellent and the trips were most scenic. The Kaunas Klaipeda run also called for a freight carrying service. Occasionally the tourists could see a boat calmly running the even course of a canal-like river and imagine it was traveling on land—a similar illusion to that much publicized picture of ships traversing the Suez canal.

There remains a great deal of work to do. The government was definitely committed to a program of improvement but must once again await the day of freedom from the clutches of the

invader. War brings the disruption of export markets and traffic lanes. There will be a long period of rebuilding necessitated by the present war and its awful aftermath. The Lithuanians have their long period of experience upon which to draw and certainly can be counted on to make a good showing. They showed an adaptability and willingness to learn during the years 1918-1940 which included post war prosperity, financial crashes and those odd treaties marked "barter trades," "most favored nation treaties," etc. One thing is certain, the Lithuanian will remain close to the soil. He will resist all efforts of the Russian and the German to move him about. The census of January 1, 1938 showed that he had:

552,070 Horses
1,172,240 Cattle
1,192,040 Hogs
614,310 Sheep
5,241,550 Chickens, Geese, Ducks and Turkeys.

Vice Consul Basil F. Macgowan of the American Legation at Kaunas prepared a trade summary for April 1, 1940. It reads in part:

"The Republic of Lithuania, including the Vilnius Territory ceded by the Soviet Union on October 10, 1939, has an area of 22,964 square miles, of which 48% is arable.

"It is bounded by Latvia on the North, the Soviet Union on the East and South, and Germany and the Baltic Sea on the West. Lithuania lies in a fertile plain drained by the Nemunas river and has a climate similar to that of Maine, with an annual mean rainfall of 26 inches.

"On Jan. 1, 1940, Lithuania had an estimated population of 2,879,070, including about 460,000 inhabitants in the Vilnius Territory. Lithuanians comprise about 70% of the population, followed by Jews, Russians, Poles, and Germans. The principal cities are: Vilnius (the constitutional capital), 220,000; Kaunas (provisional capital), 150,000; Siauliai, 30,000; Panevezys, 28,000; and Ukmerge, 13,000.

"Total imports in 1939 were valued at \$28,615,000, a decline of 24% from 1938. This figure comprises in order of importance: various yarns and thread, fertilizers, cast iron and steel, unspecified machinery, cotton tissues, scientific instruments, coal and

coke, cement, petroleum products, chemical products, woolen textiles, agricultural machinery, raw textile material, paper, bicycles, iron and steel products, automotive vehicles, tractors and engines, raw hides and skins, sugar, tin and tinware, copper products, drugs, non-ferrous metals, herring, salt, glass, leaf tobacco, aniline dyes, crockery and porcelain, various seeds, prepared hides and skins, rubber goods and cast iron products.

"Germany superseded Great Britain as the principal country of origin of Lithuanian imports, supplying 35% of the total. Great Britain supplied 26%, The Netherlands 6%; Soviet Union 5%; France 3%; and the United States 3%.

"Imports from the U. S. were valued at \$840,500, a decline of 40%.

"Total exports in 1939 were valued at \$34,324,000, decrease of 13% from 1938, and comprised, in order of importance: butter, smoked pork, flax, tow and waste, live hogs, grain, eggs, clover seed, flax seed, slaughtered poultry, fresh meat, live horses, hides and skins, saw logs, pulpwood, wood pulp, boards, live cattle, live geese, hog lard, and fruit and berries. Great Britain absorbed 41% of the total exports, followed by Germany with 34%; Soviet Union 6%; Sweden 3%; France 2.5 per cent; Belgium 2.5%; Czech Protectorate 2%; Switzerland 1.6%; Latvia 1.5%, and the United States 1.2%. Exports to the United States were valued at \$426,700.00 and consisted primarily of smoked meats, hides and skins."

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

STUDIES IN LITHUANIAN CULTURE.

A true mark of national culture is the ability to sing. Lithuanians never fail to impress the visitor with their native songs which literally seem to spring from the heart. It is the song of a nation proud of its past and proud of its ability to persevere through long periods of adversity. It is said that joy and sorrow have a definite relation and spring from almost the same source within our being. Be that as it may, the Lithuanian spends a great deal of his time in song. It is a source of justifiable pride to him that his trained singers are received in Europe and America with keen appreciation. The State saw fit to lavish a great deal of attention on the Opera in Kaunas which season runs from September until the end of May and never wants for an audience. Interest runs high in practically all operatic gems but especially well received are the typically Lithuanian operatic works known as "Birute," "Three Talismans" and "Grazina." Perhaps the best known Lithuanian singer is Kipras Petrauskas.

During the summer the visitor was thrilled by the Song Festivals in which a chorus of 10,000 took part. These lighthearted and happy singers were drawn from various parts of the country and blended their voices in delightful chorals.

The language of the country lends itself very readily to song. Music critics employ the most elaborate nomenclature in describing these outdoor fetes. As for myself, I can attest to the winning ways of children in song. On occasion, I have waited patiently by the side of the hill for children to gather by the cluster of boats on the river. I have waited and heard them eventually break into song. Some youngster would carry a clear lead while others branched off into harmonious byplays.

On occasion, while singing their native folksongs which to my mind are the most beautiful in the world, these untrained youngsters carry six and eight part harmony in a manner that reminds one of the world famous St. Olaf College Choir of Northfield, Minnesota.

A fine Conservatory of Music was located at Kaunas. The Composer J. Gruodis and others have headed its faculty. Here the beginner and advanced student can receive training. The

courses are classical with a ponderous emphasis upon complete mastery of the noted great artists who lived in the past. The student of piano must memorize all of the great compositions written for the piano before claiming to be advanced.

To engage them in conversation was to get a profound respect for Schubert, Beethoven, Wagner, Schumann, Grieg and Bach. Strangely enough, when safe in the sanctuary of their homes, they delighted in such Russian airs as "Dark Eyes." Left alone at a piano, for instance, the neophyte pianist will go through movements descriptive of sorrow, longing, desire, remorse, joy, happiness, and thrills. At times, these voluntary exercises might approximate the fierce blasts of a tempest of emotion, or so it seemed to me.

Howbeit, one must admire musical students who so love and admire their art that they will practice for hours on end in order to attain a certain degree of proficiency in execution. They enjoy their torturous exercises by completely surrendering their whole being to the demands of the composer. I can recall laughing at imitators of Liszt, for instance, who wiggled and waggled even as he was supposed to have done.

By observing the serious student of music in Lithuania, I must admit to having seen the true type in the flesh for here music is a serious business and art.

These students who tackle the study of the classical with such vigor can also slip very easily into rendering music that, to my mind, is sweeter and more pleasing than that of the noted Masters. It is quite different and therein lies the beauty. This music has sprung from a well that goes deep into centuries. It has something of the elemental in it. It is the sort of song that inspired the Masters to write what they felt.

Strangely enough, there is little of the Russian influence in Lithuanian song. It was as if the Lithuanian avoided letting his precious heritage come into contact and to blend with the Russian. They remain two separate avenues of approach to the timeless past. Lithuanian has as much joy in it as the Russian has fatalistic sorrow. The Lithuanian music has joy because God was good and there was so much for which to be thankful. He sang of the fields full for the harvest. He sang when gathering the harvest. He sang during the long winter months when remin-

iscing. He sang again in the spring when he could soon again be laboring on his beloved land. It was the son of nature who let out the music of a soul.

Some Lithuanian songs figuratively spring over hill and dale with a vivaciousness that is breath taking. To rightly tune yourself to fully appreciate this sort of musical treat, you should witness their dances which express this same theme in still another manner. Movements are quick but full of meaning. Children can best illustrate this, though oldsters never forget how to whirl in the speedy Lithuanian folk dances.

One must visit this exotic land, seek out a quiet spot by some entrancing lake, await the witching hour of music when young people gather to bind their voices in a relaying of the song they have inherited from the past, in order to properly experience this joy of which I speak. Let us say that it approximates the sort of ecstasy of which poets write. One thing is certain, it is something that the imitators in Hollywood could hope to reproduce.

The Lithuanian National Anthem has been translated into English by Mr. Harrison in his "Lithuania, Past and Present," as follows:

"Lithuania, land of heroes, Thou our Fatherland that art,
From the glorious deeds of ages shall thy sons take heart,
May thy children, day by day, labour in the narrow way,
May they strive, while they can, for the greater good of man,
May the sun of Lithuania pierce the darkness of the night,
And the light of truth and honor guide our steps aright,
May the love of our dear land, nerve and strengthen heart and
hand,
We will strive, while we can, for the brotherhood of man."

I have mentioned that the Lithuanian dips into the storehouse of his folksongs for these beautiful bits of song. It might be added that there are hundreds of thousands of these folksongs in existence. The Lithuanian calls them his Daina. During the years of restored independence, musical scholars sought out these songs and recorded as many as they found. Composers worked over the themes and sought to set them forth so they could be studied by other musicians in other lands. The Lithuanian is perfectly willing to share his precious heritage with all others, provided they love music.

It would be a serious tragedy if that native curiosity of the Lithuanian youth were again stifled for long. The flower might wither under the fear and hatred engendered by a system which calls for numerous secret police, endless searching for resistance to the small dictatorial group which rules with an iron hand, and the ultimate blending out of all minority groups by absorption methods. It would be a pity—for Lithuania has so much to give to the world. One says, almost in prayer, "Kas bus, kas nebus, O Lietuva nepražus."

The cultural life of the nation was given every opportunity of development and expression. The large and quite adequate Opera was very popular. The Ballet was above average and many young people found here an opportunity for training in this field. The Cinema made its appearance and an effort was made to bring better pictures to Lithuania through the office of a censor. The central distribution point was Berlin and very often American films arrived in such cutover condition that the full story was not to be learned. The news reels of American life generally contained evidence of great disasters, depicting fires, explosions and earthquakes. Either the movie magnates of Hollywood didn't know how to advertise America or the cutters in Berlin and other places were sabotaging American interests. If the net result had been to hold down immigration to the United States, the Consuls would have granted their unconditional approval, but the result was to destroy a high regard for things in America and encourage the wrong elements to seek entrance.

French movies were usually immoral. The German films were either filled with interminably long conversation that could only entertain the highly trained German, or with grandiose display of German prowess of arms. The Russian pictures were painfully childish and could only interest the dullard. Here again Lithuanian patience endured. An effort was made to show films made in Lithuania and some progress was noted along this line.

A visit to the Museum of Culture, located on Duonelaičio gatvė, will acquaint one with the effort made to set forth the story of Lithuania by artists, sculptors, archeologists and scholars. The building has been rebuilt and expanded so that in 1940, it truly presented a most favorable and modern aspect.

The student of history can find here a complete description of the wars for independence. Numerous articles of the era of mili-

tary supremacy during those early days have been preserved for posterity. In one gallery artists have set forth conceptions of how the Grand Dukes Gediminas, Kestutis and Vytautas might have looked. Painters have portrayed scenes from the era we know in this book as the Golden Age of Lithuania.

In another section, we find data interesting to archeology and ancient history. Passing to still other sections we find a complete presentation of peasant art and handicraft. It is a delightful experience and the government of Lithuania deserves high commendation for this wonderful national exhibit.

It is perhaps well to set before you some of the Lithuanian names of those interested in music and art. Mr. Zadeika has listed the following in his "Introducing Lithuania": "Dailes Draugija" (Art Society), founded at Vilnius, gathers around itself almost all the prominent artists, poets, and men of culture: Operatic actors such as Kipras Petrauskas, Grigaitiene, Kutkus, Jonuskaite, Dvarionaitė, Sodeika, Rakauskaite and others; Directors and stage actors such as Glinskis, Dauguvietis, Oleka-Zilinskas, Sutkus, Kubertavicius and others; writers and poets such as Maironis, Baltrusaitis, Vaizgantas, Vydunas, Jakstas, Kreve-Mickevicius, Sofija Ciurlioniene, Vaiciunas, Savickas and others. Here also we would find the composers: Naujalis, Simkus, Gruodis, Tallat-Kelpsa, Bacevicius, Dvarionas, Mikas Petrauskas; the painters: Varnas, Skleris, Kalpokas, Didziokas, Simonis and A. Zemaitis; and finally the sculptors Rimša and Zikaras.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF THE LITHUANIAN PEOPLE.

Man is essentially religious and, in his continued search for God, he reveals the marks of culture. The early Lithuanian had been innately religious. Their initial contact had possibly been with such primitive migratory peoples as the Brahmins of India, the Greeks, Cretans and Phoenicians, the Scythians and others. To what degree he was affected in matters of religion is difficult to judge from the data on hand, but we do note a similarity of religious expression, the religious veneration and adoration of the Sun, Moon and Stars. All these primitive religions attempted to personalize the Gods and interpreted their reactions in definitely human terms. For instance, the Gods grew angry, they loved sometimes out of their class and they were jealous.

During the centuries between 500 and 1000 A. D., we have evidence of this pagan religion in practice. The Lithuanian scholar, Daukantas, writes of great oak trees forming immense leafy bowers intertwined with ivy and honeysuckle. The religious rites were celebrated in such arboreal sets for to the oak tree was attached a special religious value. The priests were known by the title Krive or Vaidyla and would officiate at almost any place where stones could be gathered to form a small altar, and a fire offering made.

Certain places seem to have been chosen for the celebration of the more elaborate rites. Romuva was evidently such a place and here we could perhaps find the Chief Priest, called the Kriviu-Krivaitis. No doubt the fire altar, which always occupied the most central position in the religious service, was pyramidal in shape and large in size. A hexagonal tower was built at the place to give the proper setting and possibly to afford shelter to the priesthood charged with these various duties. Some artists have given the concept of a wall surrounding the inner court by the fire altar, wherein only the priests and the vestal virgins who tended the fire would be expected to enter. These vestal virgins were known as Vaidilutes.

The Kriviu-Krivaitis and his helpers had the task of interpreting the wishes of the Gods. They were the religious instructors of their day and from them the Lithuanians received counsel and prophetic warnings. The following list of Gods who were thus served in the early days is as follows:

Perkunas seems to have been the most powerful deity. He controlled the lightning and thunder. He could arrange matters for men in a most salutary or destructive manner. It was Perkunas who ordered the river Sventoji to lose itself in the sands before entering the Baltic Sea.

Patela ruled the underworld. This God was not confined to ruling the world of lost spirits but could find plenty of mischief to do in this world. He, it was, who suggested the doing of wrong. Vieshpats became the Father God and this term is well known even today. Giltine was the Goddess of death.

Medeine was the Goddess of the Forest and the Mother God for the wondering children of Lithuania. She protected and cared for her own. She whispered words of advice and warning. She guided and sustained those who trusted in her. There was a God of the Sea known to Samogitians as Divsvits. The Lithuanian knew a Jurate, Queen of the Sea, who lived in an amber castle and who loved a fisherman by the name of Kastytis. Her unwise love affair rebounded apparently with such force that her amber castle was demolished, and even to this day bits of it float to the shores of Lithuania.

It was Perkunas who had hurled the bolt which destroyed the castle and, even to this day, the sea nymphs or sea sirens must seek around the world for the love that is always denied them. The Lithuanians explain the strange shape of the flounder by mentioning that Jurate and her sea nymphs were wont to eat only half of these fish.

Pagan theology that seems to have developed during this long period sets forth virtue as rewarded by its own good. The right course to follow, in most instances, seems to have been dictated by rules of expediency. The priests and chief priest apparently were called upon quite regularly to interpret signs and times. The people were naturally very superstitious and preferred to find omens almost everywhere. It was this tendency which perhaps caused rivers, woods, birds, bees and animals to talk.

Fire remained the purifying medium and was a precious commodity. To keep an everlasting flame seems to have been a religious duty of early man (who lacked safety matches because of the absence of the Swedish Match Industry). Offerings of various kinds could be brought to the priests but apparently the

presence of fire upon the altar together with the proper incantations was sufficient propitiatory offering.

In times of great trouble, a blood offering was deemed necessary. It is recorded that when catastrophe threatened, the high priest would even present himself as an offering. Blood offering was efficacious for dedications. For example, on the occasion of building the great castle of Vilnius, Gediminas desiring to make it impregnable, asked the advice of his pagan priests who suggested the offering of a young virgin. It was ordered that a search be made for such a virgin and one was brought before him. Gediminas offered to spare her life if the virgin could correctly answer three questions concocted by the priests. The first question was: "What is the lightest thing in the world?" The girl promptly answered, "A babe in his mother's arms." To the second question, what is the sweetest thing in the world, the virgin replied, "The smile of a child." The third question was: "What is the hardest thing in the world?" The virgin answered, "An abused mother's heart."

Needless to say, the court marveled at the wisdom displayed by the young virgin and Gediminas ordered her released. The legendary account goes on to tell how the Lithuanian King placed a wreath of flowers under the corner stone in place of the human heart that had been originally suggested by the priests.

It was said of priests that they were held in awe by the people. They were "*Kiekviens ukininko gyvybės ir mirties viešpats*," — "Lords of the household in life and death."*

Priests wandered about the country ministering when called upon. They held religious court at given places and dispensed a certain amount of primitive justice. They advised, counseled, admonished, and went to battle. They evidently were interested in agriculture and horticulture. They seemed to have been quite independent in their own right and surely not dependent solely upon the offerings of thankful people.

There were times of special rejoicing. The Feast of Spring was celebrated in April, and during this feast the vestal virgins ascended steps to give a proper welcome to the sun. This Spring

* See Benedictsen, "*The Awakening of a Nation*," Copenhagen, 1924. It is further told that they sometimes arose to the occasion of leading in battle much after the manner of Joan of Arc.

festival is celebrated even to this day in Lithuania. There are other seasonal observances which have come down from this pagan era. The Catholic Church incorporated as many of these as was practical into their calendar.

We have pointed out that the pagan religion served the Lithuanian sufficiently well through the period known as the Golden Age. Through the trials brought upon them by the unwise Crusades of the marauding knights and the onrush of the Tartars, the pagan priests had ministered in their elemental way to the nation. But Christianity, finding that force did not avail, sought by peaceful maneuvering to win the day.

Through the instrumentality of Vytautas, the Christian faith was introduced by Polish and Czech monks and priests to a section of Lithuania. The Cross of Christ was placed on the altar within the newly built Christian Church erected on the very foundation of the pagan Chapel.

In one sense, the lives of the people were not greatly affected. There remained the deep mysticism of the ancient and time honored pagan religion. There was pomp and grandeur in the old and, if anything, there was more pomp and grandeur in the Christian ceremonies which now were to replace it.

Lithuania became nominally a Christian country during the fifteenth century and experienced the Reformation and Counter Reformation without much trouble. Through it all, the Lithuanian peasant remained stolidly non-committal. He cared neither for the right or left, for the right or wrong, or for the Christian or Catholic. He preferred to be left alone to work out whatever destiny would be his. By 1650 A. D., he became convinced that his destiny was definitely connected with the Pole and that his religion was to be Roman Catholic. He had rejected the advances of Lutheranism from Germany and Sweden and the Orthodox Catholicism from Russia.

The Church of Rome had learned one lesson from the Reformation that pleased the Lithuanian. They knew that a nation should have its own clergy and had encouraged the Lithuanian youth of promise to take up the study for the orders of the Church. Lithuanian clergy eventually made their appearance and the situation was saved for the Catholic Church.

The turnover from the Polish clergy to the Lithuanian was a slow and rather painful procedure, for the Poles had something beside religion in mind. They wanted the full realization of their chauvinistic dreams. They held their positions without thought of surrender until well into the period of Russian captivity which followed the downfall of Lithuania-Poland in the years 1772-1795.

One of the proudest boasts of the Catholic Church is that she has long paid attention to the needs of the world in the field of charity. She quite correctly turns the attention of people to her many fine institutions and says: "See the evidence of our good works."

In Lithuania, she could quite justly say that she had served long and well. There were many large Church structures and some monasteries and convents. The Church had served the religious needs of the people for a very long time. On this battlefield of the Baltic Sea, she had met Protestantism and won the day. In fact, Lithuania was her only hold on this famous Sea, for Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Germany were all very definitely Lutheran. Poland and Lithuania remained the only pride of the Catholic Church in all of North Europe.

We have referred to the struggle between Russia and the Catholicism of Lithuania. It is my belief that this antagonism engendered by Russia's attitude aided more directly than any other single factor in the strengthening of Lithuania's faith. It became a national zeal to resist the Russian. It became synonymous to be a Catholic and Lithuanian. I might add that paganism still persisted even though the Catholic religion was bolstered by the nationalistic urge.

When Lithuania regained her independence in 1918, the Catholic Church was ready to take over. The Priests were in a position to advise on national affairs as well as religious matters. Several of the men counted as original patriots of Lithuania were priests. Some of the interesting political priests are: Mironas, Purickis, Krupavicius, Jurgutis, Tamosaitis, and Rainys.

The Church was quite active in the early formative period. They watched the Taryba and counseled in such a way that the interests of the Church were served first. They claimed and were given the right to conduct the affairs of education. They held to the Church metrication system so that they could better control

marriage and divorce within the nation. A Concordat was arranged with the Vatican. (Such Concordats had caused a Catholic writer for the Foreign Relations Magazine to exclaim in ecstasy that the condition of the Catholic Church was better after the World War than ever before in its honored history.)

But events were so shaping themselves that the condition in Lithuania was not as healthy as some superficial observers might think. The situation was one of too much Catholicity. A quarrel developed within the ranks of the faithful when the question of Vilnius was discussed. The Vatican had decided to recognize Vilnius as a Polish city and, once having spoken, never changed its mind. The year was 1926 and the break with Rome on the part of many Lithuanians was real and effective.

It appears that the influence of the Church remained behind the Christian Democratic party even when that organization was forced into permanent retirement. The Church leaders kept a consistent pressure within the bounds of good reason. Many of their Christian Democrats were included in various Cabinets or held important appointive posts. All were good Catholics. It was interesting to note that the Church asked for and received the post of censorship. It must be admitted that the Lithuanians who were coached from Rome used the greatest amount of perspicuity and, once on the inside, served well.

In performing the actual work in the Churches and on the mission field, the Catholic Church was quite active. The greatest number of priests came from the Jesuit Seminary at Kaunas. There were also Dominican and Franciscan monasteries at the provisional capital. There were monks too, who went about in sandals ministering to the needs of the poor.

Churches were filled to overflowing on almost every Sunday. I heard the criticism from a visiting Dominican priest from America and vouched for by an American Jesuit (also a visitor) that the Lithuanian clergy was lazy and in poor spiritual condition. This may be so but the observer did not get that impression. I was quite impressed by the numbers of people pressing into the Churches; usually the place was full of women while the men stood outdoors.

I visited many different Churches throughout the country and invariably found a keen interest in the observance of rites though

occasionally it seemed that priests ran through their forms rather carelessly.

When one has sufficient money, the burial service can be impressive indeed. In Lithuania, charges are made according to means and the service may be top, medium or just ordinary. Whatever the creed, the procession winds its weary way on foot from Church to cemetery. Here the interment service is short but apparently most people enjoy their grief for they will linger as long as possible, return often to the grave, and indulge in all sorts of exercises, candle burning and other ceremonies about the grave.

I observed that the large cemetery in Kaunas had four sections. In the north end lay the Mohammedan section with the star and crescent over the graves. Then came the largest and most imposing portion which was Roman Catholic. On one side and to the front of this was the Lutheran cemetery with its even rows of well kept soldier graves of Lutheran Germans who died fighting to establish the freedom of Lithuania, and finally to the south, the section reserved for the Orthodox. This description of the cemetery will serve to introduce us to a short review of the other Churches within Lithuania. It has been estimated that approximately 75% of the people are nominal Roman Catholics; 10% are nominally Lutheran; about 7% are Hebrews, most of whom are orthodox Jews; and the balance are Orthodox (2%).

The Lutherans were distributed, for the main part, along the German border. By intermarriage and contact, many Lithuanians have become Lutheran in faith. The city of Taurage was a strong Lutheran center. In Kaunas, the Lithuanian service preceded the German service in the little old Lutheran Church where six of the ten Envoys Extraordinary and Chargés accredited to Lithuania worshipped. This listing included the German, Latvian, Estonian and American Ministers, as well as the Swedish and Danish Chargés. The British Minister was Episcopalian; the French and Italian were Roman Catholic; the Russian was nothing.

The Hebrews worshipped in their synagogues, located at advantageous parts of the cities. It was my pleasure to visit in the Hebrew Schools of the Talmud in Vilnius after this city was turned over to the Lithuanians. In conversing with various Hebrew leaders of Lithuania, it was my conclusion that religious interest ran high. The Hebrews have rightly deserved a high regard for their

religious interest and for their persistence in maintaining their schools and relief stations in spite of all difficulties.

The Greek Orthodox have some of the most elaborate settings for their Eastern style Catholicism. Their bass singing was excellent and their rites impressive. Fewer people attend these services but they make up for it with style. Their padres wore the fanciest regalia in all Eastern Europe. I shall never forget their Easter services when everyone delighted in kissing each other. Their ceremonies drew many curious onlookers.

The Roman Catholics were building a fine and imposing structure on the high eminence of the heights overlooking Kaunas. This Church was intended to be the spiritual example of a reborn Lithuania. Father Kapocius did more than anyone else to bring this worthy project to completion. The Russians utilized this Church for the showing of Bolshevik movies in 1940 when they took over Lithuania.

The Reformed Church (Presbyterian) had built the outer shell of their new Church on Putvinskio Gatve and had plans for its completion.

Other Church structures worthy of note were the Church of Vytautas near the landing docks of the river Nemunas, the Jesuit Church, and the Students' Church near the President's Mansion. It was at the Students' Church that I heard the finest Church singing in all Europe. There was the Cathedral which dated to the 16th century and was one of the most uncomfortable Churches I have ever been in. The Church of the Mohammedans, called a Mosque, was certainly a misfit gem; a reminder of the day when the Tartars were brought home from the Black Sea by Vytautas as slaves.

In passing, it is well to mention that the Memel Territory was almost entirely Lutheran. The Church of St. John in Memel was a very fine example of Church architecture. In this city, the tourist found also the Baptist and Episcopalian Churches.

In summarizing, it is quite correct to say that Lithuania has a great deal of cultural wealth. She reaches further back into the depths of history than any other European nation and brings to us an elemental language with root attachments to the ancient Sanskrit. She tells us a story in her Daina and other bits of song and literature which is quite revealing. Her schools and churches

have a comparatively short history for she remained pagan until the 15th century, but once having adopted the Christian faith, she exhibited a tenacious steadfastness that was exemplary. In her Museums are gathered bits of evidence that will interest the archeologist and scientist, the artist and musician, and all who have an interest in the better things of life. Standing close by the Museum is a tower which has a unique symbolical connection with Lithuanian independence. A few paces from the tower is the cairn dedicated to the memory of the unknown soldier.

Since all visitors to Lithuania seem most deeply impressed by this daily observance to the memory of Lithuania's brave dead, we shall accept it as a fine example of modern day Lithuanian culture. At break of day, the trumpeter mounts the steps leading to the top of Liberty Tower from which he sends the clear call to observe the coming of a new day. At the close of each day, the trumpeter again mounts the step and sends a call to observe day's passing and to send a prayer of thanksgiving to the Maker of man.

Answering the trumpeter, at the close of day, is still another trumpeter. Emerging from a side room of the Museum, a solemn procession slowly advances along an arched pathway through the tower base and on to positions by the side of Lithuania's tomb of the unknown warrior. In calm and dignified manner, the ceremony is held. The band plays a hymn dedicated to the unknown dead who so courageously gave their lives that Lithuania might live. At a signal, the lancers present arms and appropriate music is played. During the ceremony, there is an exchange of clarion calls from the tower to the group below.

Most interesting, perhaps, is the advent of a soldier who steals in from the side to light the pagan fire offering on the small altar standing immediately in front of the cairn. This is to honor the pagan religion of old.

The government has placed a neon cross slightly above the bronze plaque on the pyramidal cairn. The cairn has been constructed of stones gathered from the various battlefields where Lithuanian soldiers fought Russian Bolsheviks, ambitious Poles and other enemies. The cross is lighted and at the signal all bow their heads in silent prayer. Flags are lowered and Lithuania has again observed the passing of a day with a renewal of the

pledge to ever be mindful that liberty is sweeter than anything else—Christian liberty—that gives the sure hope of living forever. The band strikes up another tune and the procession wends its way to the starting point within the Museum.

Few people have observed this ceremony without feeling a strange emotion. Here is a nation who remembers in a daily manner. It is a solemn lesson to be mindful of those things in life which have lasting value. The inscription on the shrine reads: "Redde quod debes."

Occasionally, one can observe a more elaborate ceremony at this shrine. It was customary for the Lithuanian Americans to gather here to observe the fourth of July. Since a replica of the liberty bell had been sent from America as a gift from the sons of Lithuania, it was fitting that it should be rung on this occasion. On the bell appeared the words: "Skambink per amžius vaikams Lietuvos. Tas laisvės nevertas kas negina jos," which means "Forever toll to Sons of Lithuania. Whoever fails to defend their liberty is unworthy of it."

At one of these special ceremonies held in 1920, Colonel Ryan had planted a rose to signify the everlasting friendship of America with Lithuania. In 1940, the American Minister, Mr. Norem, planted an ivy plant which had been sent by the American Red Cross from Mount Vernon.

The Lithuanian organizations usually paraded to the shrine of the unknown soldier and from a position before it, heard speeches and voiced resolutions. Since the desire to march was strong, the government set aside Sundays for various observances. Long lines of marchers, carrying banners of their organization or dressed in native costume, made such festive gatherings very colorful. As a general rule, marchers brought wreaths to place by the tomb.

The War Museum was one of the first public buildings erected by the government. Since the early days, it had undergone many improvements and today presents a very worthy appearance. It is indeed more than a War Museum for some of the wings are reserved for cultural exhibits.

The great hall of the building is dedicated to Lithuania's history. A large statue of Vytautas seems to dominate the center.

Pictures of Grand Dukes are given precedence over the later rulers and leaders of the Lithuanian nation. Artists have preserved the historical scenes of greatest interest. All is tastefully arranged. The wing sections of this room have been given to memorializing the war for independence. Relics, pictures and other objects of interest preserve the memory of various divisions of the Lithuanian army. All of this in the presence of artillery, a stuffed horse, a detailed map outlining the wars of 1918-1920, swords, etc., make up a place where one prefers to spend hours.

One show-case, for instance, contains the various uniforms used by Lithuanian soldiers and lo, there is the American khaki with the American eagle screaming defiance. One can almost imagine the surprise of the uneducated Bolshevik in 1918-1920 who suddenly spied the Lithuanian volunteer advancing, much in the same manner and surely in the same uniform, as the Yankee doughboy of Flanders field and Archangel. But other sections of the Museum beckon us to get an introduction to Lithuanian culture.

Let us start with the section wherein we find evidence from the archeological pits. Here are objects from ancient periods of history. One is told that certain iron objects show an evolution into the form of the Christian cross. There are bridle bits and stirrups from the age when the Crusader entertained ideas of finding good hunting in Lithuania. There are crude bits of jewelry, kitchen utensils, etc., from ancient to more modern times. Objects of stone, copper, bronze, iron, are all very interesting. Burial pits show evidence of the use of fire in the cremation of war leaders together with many horses, weapons and miscellaneous articles thought useful in the happy hunting grounds. There are coins which evidence the presence of Frisian and Viking in this timeless country. Carving and weaving, painting and sculpture, iron work and dress making are some of the arts you will find preserved in another sector of the Museum which deserves a long period of study.

The visitor to the Museum will observe one room dedicated to the memory of the Red Cross. Here is told quite graphically, the story of how the Lithuanian Red Cross came into being and how it worked during the war of independence. Quite prominently displayed is the portrait of Colonel Ryan who was connected with the American Red Cross work in Lithuania.

There are many other sections which we cannot describe but shall mention in passing. One shows the airplane remains of the great Lithuanian flight from America to Lithuania. (After successfully negotiating the ocean, these intrepid aviators met disaster from some unknown cause while flying over the forest region of Prussia.) Another shows modern day Lithuania at work. Still another preserves the memory of those heroic book runners who served during the dark days of Russian occupancy. A nook in this room has several Napoleonic relics. So one could go on and on, enumerating the various points of interest of the great Museum.

Just when the ancient Dainos or Folksongs of the Lithuanian originated is not known. Many of these old tales deal with subjects that seem to indicate an age of at least 3000 years. Others have themes that suggest the great adventures of the Golden Age of Lithuania when Vytautas led the legion to fame and fortune. Scholars who have made an extensive study of the Folksongs estimate the number extant to be around several hundred thousand.

The discovery of printing by Gutenberg in the 15th century helped set the intellect of the world in proper motion. Books could now be printed, records preserved forever, education by new methods was possible and, all of this, made accessible to the common people.

In 1547 Anno Domini, the first book to be printed into the Lithuanian language was the Small Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther. This work came via Germanized Lithuanians of East Prussia. We bear in mind that Lithuania at this time, relied upon a Polish Catholic clergy for religious guidance and service. The Reformation movement was not to be denied and a serious attempt was made to inculcate the new expression of the same old truth by means of printed books, pamphlets and itinerant preachers. The Catechism was followed by many other books translated into and printed in the Lithuanian language by a Pastor Bretkunas of Koenigsberg.

The Reformation and especially the printed Catechism in Lithuanian awoke an interest in the Lithuanian language. True it is that in the 18th Century the average Lithuanian peasant could not read. However, all had a lively interest in the use of their native tongue and desired the ability to read. Grammars and dictionaries

were in demand. The first practical dictionary was compiled in the year 1749.

Bishop Baranuskas is said to have written a work in Lithuanian entitled "Anyksciu Grove." Still another bit of early literature in the Lithuanian tongue was written in the year 1750 by Christian Duonaitis and called "The Four Seasons." This period is not prolific since more attention was given the study and use of the Polish language by Lithuania's intelligentsia.

Though an attempt was made in the early part of the 19th century to awaken a new interest in the Lithuanian culture, Russian edicts and Polish indifference helped to crush all creative Lithuanian thought. In time, the use of the language was prohibited, and during the dark days Lithuanian as a spoken tongue seemed to have largely disappeared. It remained a "home" language.

Again from the outside, came the spark which fanned the interest into a keen fire. Dr. Basanavicius, the Sainted patriot, edited his "Dawn" and appealed to this people not to lose faith. From the Motinos-Mokykla was to come a fine assortment of proud and strong Lithuanians who believed in themselves and their country, who used their native tongue because they had kept alive its magic touch, and who yearned for an opportunity of showing just how much they dared for their fatherland. Mr. Rimša, the sculptor, has caught the spirit of this home school. Others, too, had the same zeal and inspiration as Dr. Basanavicius. They wrote articles, organized groups and carried on a series of meetings, edited newspapers, seized every opportunity of expressing the desire of the Lithuanians for autonomy and freedom, and gave an inspiration to others who came in touch with them.

The Lithuanian clergy was not inactive. Many true sons of the fatherland had taken their vows and studied in Seminaries, worked in Monasteries or served parishes. Many of the more enlightened sought to produce volumes of religious homilies, meditations and other works of theology.

Bear in mind that the Lithuanian mother still loves to tell little legends like the following: Once upon a time, when certain knights were returning from far off wars, a certain Queen hastened out to meet them before they should enter the city. The Queen, on mischief bent, told certain knights how their wives had died from grief on such long separation. The knights were

overcome with grief and committed suicide. This turn of events overcame the Queen whose wicked tongue had worked the folly and she was condemned to live forever as a swallow so that her chattering might be an ever present warning against idle jesting.

Another legend ran: Three young brothers went forth to war. No doubt, they followed their Chief who owed allegiance to some mighty Prince. The three brothers had fought valiantly but had been forced to give up their lives on the battlefield. Their small sister awaited their return with some foreboding and no little anxiety. When the three horses returned without their masters, she lamented their absence. A crow came into the yard to tell the tale. The full knowledge of the tragedy caused her such grief that the Gods had mercy upon her and changed her into a cuckoo so that she could tell sorrow to the world.

The University of Vytautas in Kaunas was a most interesting school. We have pointed out that the Lithuanians were kept from the University that their industry and foresight had founded in the year 1579 A. D. at Vilnius. Forced to stay in the provisional capital city of Kaunas, they laid out the foundations for their new University. There were to be seven faculties teaching the following subjects: 1) Philosophy and Theology (Catholic); 2) Theology (Evangelical Lutheran); 3) History and Literature; 4) Law; 5) Medicine; 6) Mathematics and Natural Science; 7) Engineering.

Housed in a modern plant, the enrollment of more than 4,000 students in 1935 listened to the lectures of the 400 professors and lecturers on the Faculty. Visiting men from England, France, Germany and Italy were added attractions. I visited a number of the lecture rooms and noted a fine wholesome interest being exhibited. For the most part, the type of student was quite serious.

In the fall of 1939, when Vilnius was returned to Lithuania, an effort was made to coordinate the curricula of the two schools. It was at once apparent that the Polonization work made most of the faculty in Vilnius quite objectionable. Lithuanian teachers were soon supplied and some departments of the University of Vytautas were moved to Vilnius. The Library of the University had been built up to more than 100,000 volumes. This number was greatly augmented by the addition of the original school at Vilnius. One can only conjecture what has happened to this fine

collection of books since the Barbarians from the Steppes have had their way.

One exceptionally fine library existed in a Catholic Seminary and here one could find rare books that would be impossible to replace. They represented a life work of a great priest. It is reported that the Russian vandals burned the whole collection since it dealt with religious subjects.

One could enumerate other fine achievements of a nation seeking diligently to raise the cultural level of their people. Noteworthy was the extension work of the radio. Instruction was given at certain intervals. Church services were brought to the bed ridden. Music appreciation courses were taught to all interested listeners and the general tone of the musical offerings was kept on a high plane. The Lithuanian Elta service supplied the people of Lithuania with a liberal supply of unbiased news reports. This was a rare treat since the news items given by the Russians were certainly predigested into disgusting untruth, the German radio controls were interested in vicious propaganda, and the British sought to appeal to one's sympathy with a splattering of truth and propaganda. At one time (1934) it was estimated that more than 20,000 radio sets were in use in Lithuania. In 1938, this estimated figure was 60,000.

No discussion of Lithuanian Culture would be complete without a study of the language that attracted Goethe, Lessing and scores of philologists. We have mentioned that its source goes back to the times and places known to early users of the Sanskrit and Greek. Comparative study shows that many root forms are truly elemental and constitute a most promising proving ground for research. Some philologists have suggested that the Lithuanian language was heard at the tower of Babel. All are agreed that it goes back to the period B. C. 2000-1500.

Various examples have been set down for study and I will record only a chosen few. Similarity of form is illustrated by these examples but it should be pointed out that relation of thought expression is also a testimony.

English:	Lithuanian:	Sanskrit:	Latin:
God	Dievas	Devas	Deus
Son	Sunus	Sunu	Filius
Day	Diena	Dina	Dies

Water	Vanduo	Udon	Aqua
Fire	Ugnis	Agnis	Ignis
Tooth	Dantis	Danta	Dens-tis
Dog	Suva	Sva	Canis
Who	Kas	Kas	Quis

One characteristic of the Lithuanian language is the power to add diminutive endings which will show degree. For instance: the word for little is *mazas* and we also find *mazytis*, *mazelis*, *maziliukas*, *mazilytis*, *mazytukas*, *mazytytis*, *mazytuliukas*, *mazutelis*, etc.

One might hear the Lithuanian say: *Vyrai, traukite junga.* (It means: Drag the yoke.)

The Latin would use this expression: *Viri, trahite iugum.*

In Lithuanian: *Dievas davė dantis, duos ir duonos.* (It means: God gave us teeth and shall provide bread.)

The Greek says: *Dzeus des odontas dosel sitos.*

In the above examples, we see that it is quite possible that the early Greek and ancient Lithuanian spoke tongues so nearly alike that they could have understood each other. Both peoples had the means which allowed a fluidity of expression. They could employ phrases running the length and breadth of cajoling endearments.

The Lithuanian of today is quite interested in tracking down expressions of earliest vintage. During the course of history, they had added many foreign expressions to their spoken tongue as, for instance, *blaki* from the German *bischofen*, *Ponas* from the Polish *Pan*. Several fine dictionaries have been published which encourage Lithuanians to use the original words and expressions. Their language had come to be a uniting bond and, in America, as in other parts of the world where Lithuanian colonies have taken root, Lithuanians are encouraged to keep their language alive.

From an article found in Volume X of "Ideas That Have Influenced Civilization" (pages 367-374) we made the following study: (The Lithuanian is added):

Eng.	Lith.	Greek	Latin	German	Gothic
one	vienas	oinos	unus	ein	ains
two	du	duo	duo	zwei	twai
ten	dešimtis	deka	decem	zehn	taihun
three	trys	treis	tres	drei	thrija
eat	{ esti (valgyti)	edo	edo	essen	itan
five	penki	pente	quinque	funf	fimf
sit	sėsk	hezomai	sede	sitzen	sitan
is	{ esti (yra)	esti	est	ist	ist
do	daryti	drau titheimi	facere feci	thun	taujan
red	raudonas	eruthros	ruber	rot	rauths
word	vardas zodis	logos	verbum	wort	waurd
sleep	miegoti	hupnos	somnus	schlaf	slepan
father	tevas	pater	pater	vater	fadar
brother	brolis	phrator	frater	bruder	brother
know	zinoti	gignosko	noscere	konnen	kunnam
what	ka	pote	quod	was	hvas
four	keturi	tetterares	quattuor	vier	fidwor
warm	šiltas	thermos	formus	warms	warm
loud	garsus	klutos	inclutus	laut	hluda

Let no one misunderstand and say that the Lithuanian is too ancient for modern use. It has kept alive its flexible spirit so that today one finds many inclusions. At the same time it has retained the rich, original and archaic forms so interesting to philologists. It remains a worthwhile study in itself and attests the staying qualities of these wonderful people.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE PROBLEM OF MINORITIES

One problem within a State which is difficult to classify as either an inherent weakness or a potential strength is the minority group. In Lithuania, as a heritage from the past, we find groups of Tartars, Russians, Gypsies, Poles, Germans and Jews. Technically speaking, we should also include the Latvians but this group is racially related to the Lithuanians and we will pass them by. The first mentioned group was brought to the land by the Lithuanians themselves. They were slaves who subsequently won their freedom. Only a small group of Tartars remain within Lithuania today. This small group does maintain a Mohammedan Mosque of exquisite proportions. Also a very small group are the Gypsies who seem destined to wander disconsolately about and live upon whatever country they can infest.

The Russian problem was inherited from the Russian occupation of 1795-1915 A. D. Large numbers of Great Russians were brought into the Lithuanian lands for colonization purposes. In 1923, the Lithuanian census takers found over 50,000 of these Russian colonists who had become firmly rooted to the soil of Lithuania. Though a source of irritation to the Lithuanian government, these people could not be moved en masse since they neither wished to move nor did any other country, including Russia, want them.

The Lithuanians did attempt to teach them the Lithuanian language and customs. The government exerted a great deal of influence in so arranging the educational program that the children of these unwelcome and unwanted descendants of colonists would understand Lithuanian as thoroughly as possible. Strangely enough, the Russians remained quite a bit at home amongst the Lithuanians for nearly every Lithuanian adult understands the Russian language.

For the most part, the Russian constituency belonged to the Eastern Orthodox Church. Their colorful services were held at various places where a sufficient number of the colonists could gather. In Kaunas, their special high festival services were attended by many visitors since it was more colorful than the Roman Catholic rite. Their method of counting the days also varies from

that commonly used by other European Christians. At certain political functions, one could observe a place of honor reserved by government for the Orthodox Bishop of the Russians (a well marked man since he wore the traditional whiskers).

There was a Cinema (movie house) known as the Capital, which catered to the needs of the Russians. At this theatre were shown many Russian propaganda pictures during the period from September, 1939 to July, 1940. Most of these pictures were exceedingly dull and poorly made but the Russians of Lithuania made the theatre a paying proposition. In the provinces, the Russians kept to themselves. They resisted the efforts of the Lithuanians to move them away from their small villages. Their inferiority complex seemed marked and they remained dully unimpressive. One cannot ascribe very much credit to the Russian group for the remarkable progress made during the period of restoration. They remained literally a people without a country. The coming of the Bolsheviks was not unwelcomed by this group.

In contrast to the Russian minority, we find the German group in Lithuania. Since all Germans were members of the Lutheran Church, it became general to consider all Lutherans as Germans. This would certainly be erroneous in the extreme since many Lithuanians had become Lutherans. When the Russians seized the country in 1940, practically all Lutherans were quite content to be counted as Germans since it meant a release from the clutches of the Bolsheviks, even though it also meant they must forsake their homes to become German settlers in the new areas vacated by the Poles. 50,000 managed to be evacuated.

In 1923, the number of Germans within the Lithuanian State, exclusive of the Memel Territory, was set at 29,231. This number is very difficult to set down as correct since the Lithuanian census taker very often asked only the question: "Do you speak Lithuanian in the home?" If a German inadvertently answered "Yes" to this question, he was made over into a Lithuanian. Then, too, arises the problem of racial mutation. During the long period of time many people had become confused as to whether they were German, Lithuanian, Polish or Russian.

Let us assume, however, that the figure is accurate. These Germans were, for the most part, engaged in agricultural pursuits and owned the show places of western Lithuania. Their German

blood or German training had brought forth marks of neatness and industry. Their stock was first class and their methods of dealing in business were quite advanced.

There were many German business people located at Kaunas and other points within Lithuania proper. Their position became even stronger when the Lithuanians added Memelland to the Lithuanian economic unit. This group of Germans did bring a definite contribution to Lithuanian life since they cooperated for the welfare of the country. It might be added that such leaders of Lithuanian economic life as Zaunius, Tillmans and others were of German origin.

Quite different from the German minority problem was that posed by the presence of the Poles. Unwelcome in Lithuania from the time of Vytautas, these Poles had been placed over the Lithuanians by force. They had assumed positions as lords of the Lithuanian estates. Notable example is the Tischkevicz family which is reported to have had about 30 scattered estates throughout Lithuania. Polish workers had been brought to these estates and thus literally became colonists within Lithuania. In the year 1923, the number of Poles within the State was set at 65,599 men, women and children.

The Polish minority was quite content to rest secure within Lithuania while making demands for political representation and separate schooling. The minority was the object of an intense Lithuanian hatred since the attitude of the Lithuanian government was decidedly anti-Polish, following the steal of Vilnius by Zeligowski. For a time, the wants of the Polish minority were carefully considered, for the Social Democrats and Populists needed their support in the Seimas.

The largest minority problem within Lithuania was the Jewish Question. Of longer standing than even the Polish, this problem appeared very vexing to all European nations bent on chauvinistic purposes. The Lithuanian Grand Duke Vytautas had invited Jewish artisans to Lithuania in 1400. It is to be recalled that Jews had appeared in Russia as early as 800, when they fled from Arabic persecution. (Note that Arabs are also Semitic). The Jew had slowly migrated to Minsk and other points during the years 800-1400. He had laboriously studied and carried on at his various trades. He had become the banker, the importer, exporter, caterer and lawyer.

Comparatively few Jews had answered the call of Vytautas in 1400. The few that blazed the trail to this part of the world continued to keep a contact with their relatives in other Eastern European cities. Their lot in Lithuania during the hard years of early development was not excellent but they persevered and seemed content to stand prosperity and adversity in order. Later they were often the object of ridicule from the Russian and Polish overlords.

When the nation of Lithuania again tasted of freedom and chose to set up as a free and independent Republic, its leaders fully realized that certain minority problems would of necessity be theirs. One of these problems was the presence of some 150,000 people of Jewish nationality in their midst. One reason for this seemingly large minority figure was that in accordance with the Russian "pale" laws, the Jews had moved to Lithuania in order that they might enjoy certain privileges of trading and living that were denied to them elsewhere. For example, a large part of Latvia and the whole of Estonia was not open to the Jew. Not all of Ukraine was opened to them and many a Southern Jew migrated to parts of Poland. Kaunas and Vilnius were located in the zone open to Jewish activities and these places have had a large number.

These people possess a resiliency to persecution that is amazing. When one considers that they have for generations and centuries endured the hatred of all Christians, one is amazed to see them still seeking a place near Christians with whom they most certainly prefer to carry on dealings.

During the years when the rich thought it noble to ride a horse and fight a duel or engage in wars, holy or otherwise, the Jew was instructed in such lowly arts as trading and banking. He was not allowed to own land. He was persecuted whenever possible and forced to abide within certain sections that became known as ghettos. He was literally forced to maintain a closed family tradition whether he so preferred or not. It was no longer a desperate thing for the Rabbis to watch lest one of their girls marry a Christian; the Christian saw to it by unwritten laws and enforced custom. Whomsoever should marry the lowly Jew would of course be ostracized.

But the Jew prospered. He rapidly learned the art of banking and became the greatest banker of all times. In fact, the greatest world bankers of today are Jewish. He had an insatiable thirst

for knowledge and entered every school that was open to him. He very nearly became sole proprietor of certain professional branches and managed to make of schooling a monopoly. Even today, one hears that Jewish students are to be preferred because of their application and keen intellect. The Jew feels that he must sharpen his weapons of learning in order to carry on the unequal fight against those elements that everlastingly seem to overcloud him and obscure his destiny.

The Jews of Lithuania had something of value to give the small and ambitious nation. Their keen interest in business could be their donation. It must be admitted, to their undying credit, that they worked with might and main for the welfare of Lithuania. They were builders extraordinary. They started new industries and opened many of the new shops. They set themselves patiently to the work of constructing modern apartment buildings for they realized the growing needs of the new capital city of Kaunas. They offered themselves in every business capacity but the Lithuanian was wary for he knew the incentive was solely for profit.

Though the Lithuanian allowed the Jewish citizen every right and gave him a wide latitude in which to work and have his being, yet they soon evinced a spirit that the Jew quite properly regarded as ominous. The Lithuanian felt that Lithuanians must be trained to care for the business life of the new nation if true strength was to be attained. They regarded the Jew in the same category as the German, namely, as a foreigner whose help they would need only through the formative period. They could, in time, regulate him through proper governmental means such as the license system, taxation, the Cooperatives, etc. The Lithuanians had observed how the Russians were utilizing the Jews in various Syndicate positions and they were supplementing them whenever it was deemed necessary.

The Jew knew that it was coming. Many of them representing American interests complained of preferential treatment accorded to Lithuanian competitors. American-Jewish firms were loath to surrender to the spirit of progress.

In the years 1935-1940 many of them felt that the certain prejudice was increasing against them. How forgetful a nation could be to their undisputed service rendered during the early days. More and more of the Jews turned to various Legations, especially

that of the United States, and sought to obtain visas so that they might start anew in some foreign land where they would not receive the time honored stigma of being just too smart for their fellow men to love. Thoughts of war disturbed him.

War does break up his life; it ruins his Ghetto and it drives him hither and yon. War is something that the Jew had been accused of fomenting—but here is where the Christian errs. The Jew doesn't mind the fact that wars sometimes must necessarily come and changes be effected. It might even result in some immediate profit for him in matters of trade and sudden spurts of business interest. However, he also knows that he suffers from a wide spread and protracted war in greater degree than his Gentile neighbor. He would not invite catastrophe.

In wartime persecution grows more intense and Ghettos are destroyed. I should hate to see more pathetic figures than the poor miserable Jewish people who fled into Lithuania when Poland went down before the German conquerors. They brought with them tales of degrading ceremonies performed upon them by the specially trained German bulldozers called the Black Guard (SS and SA men). Many suffered indignities to their person such as being partially shaved of locks and beards. Greater than loss of honor was the sacrifice of their homes and wealth.

These refugees told of having bartered and traded their way through all sorts of circumstances until they reached places of safety. Some were forced to trade down to their last stitch of clothing in order to reach Lithuania.

There are many poor Jews. The fable that all Jews are wealthy is one they, too, would like to believe. There are many infirm Jews who are not robust in health and who are in need of medical care and rest. Perhaps their start in the Ghetto was not conducive to the best health and, in war, these poor unfortunates oft-times give up their lives from sheer exhaustion and exposure.

No, the Jew does not want war and will work against war with the same zeal as his Gentile neighbor. Once aroused to a fighting war tempo, however, he is apt to expect greater punishment of his erstwhile tormentor and enemy.

It would be interesting to speculate upon the future of the Jew in Europe. Many would favor his being armed and settled in a Palestine of his very own. These same prognosticators exclaim:

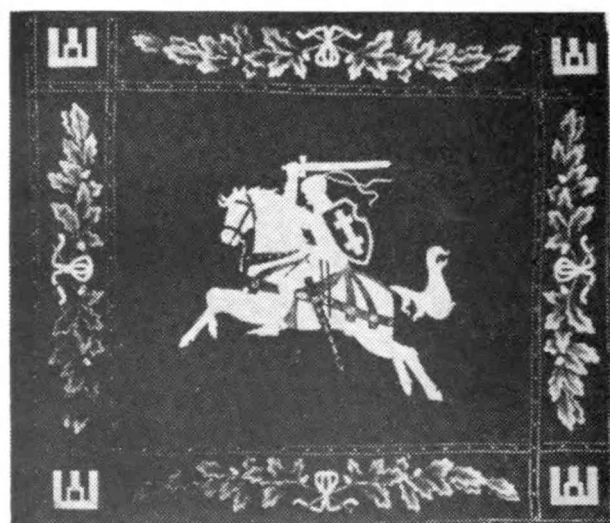
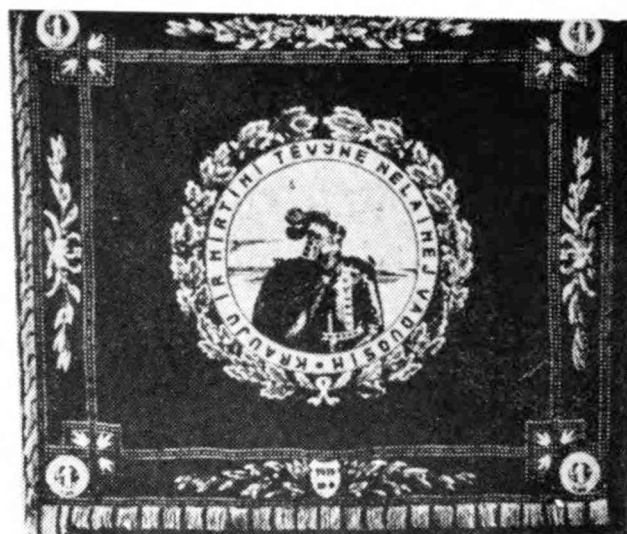
"Let him carve out his own destiny against his own relatives, the Arabs. If he has enough of good arms, he can take care of himself."

One Lithuanian leader said: "When Lithuanians, having regained their independence, began to put their country in order, they concentrated small capital by means of share companies, cooperatives and other economic organizations, using capital for agriculture, trade and commerce. For this reason private initiative had to take second place. This could have affected the Jewish minority. They had previously had in their hand the initiative in trade and industry as well as other activities. Private initiative was forced to make room for collectivism. In the space of several years much of Lithuania's export and import was removed from Jewish hands. They had to cope now with Lithuanian competitors who had acquired experience in various branches of trade and industry. Since in Lithuania only 20% of the population live in cities and all 7% of the Jewish minority are town-dwellers, their position became difficult and the country seemed to have too little living-space for them. Many emigrated to Palestine, the United States of America and to all other places where they could get visae. In some respects emigration is inevitable to them. This was acknowledged also by leaders of Jewish world organizations. On their visits to Lithuania they would complain of their hard lot in all of Europe. The only country where they could get humane treatment, said they, was Lithuania."



Entry of Lithuanian army into their capital Vilnius, 1940





First flags used by Lithuanian army

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THE FUTURE OF LITHUANIA.

Only a prophet can accurately foretell future events but a study of Lithuania's past would seem to indicate that the expression: "Kas bus, kas nebus, O Lietuva nepražus", which means, "Come what may, Lithuania will always stay" has always been correct. This mighty and ancient people have been bred to hardship and inured to pain and suffering from time immemorial. They have seen nations in turmoil. They have felt the stirrings of nations on the move. They have known hardship in warfare against such redoubtable foes as the Crusader, the Tartar, the Russian, Pole and German. They have passed through the crucibles of hate and have never completely bowed before Slav or German. They have always won through to victory.

Many people were prone to think that with the coming of the Bolshevik in 1940, Lithuania was definitely through as a nation. They were quite willing to designate to her a position subservient to Hitler when his legions marched through the land in the 1941 campaign against Russia. However, one recalls that the Lithuanian is not easily uprooted from the soil that has been his since time immemorial. The size of Lithuanian land holdings has varied between twenty thousand square miles centering about the Nemunas river to the vast empire of Vytautas which extended from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Lithuania has learned one lesson that precludes any desire for grandiose expansion. She wants nothing more nor less than that portion of Eastern Europe which is hers by right of continuous settlement and which is approximately 35,000 square miles in extent with Vilnius as the traditional capital city.

Another Lithuanian proverb is to the effect that if one is in a hurry, it is wise to go slowly. Patience is required of those who would move slowly and surely forward, but the Lithuanian is eminently fitted for this role in history. Time does not have a great significance if the true ends are eventually served. The fact that Lithuanians will never be content without complete and full liberty is sufficient reason to believe that they will succeed. They are no strangers to hardship and sorrow. They have been hardened by long periods of resistance to Poles and Russians, their tradi-

tional Slavic enemies. They have won notable victories over the pressing Teutons.

During her period of twentieth century independence, Lithuania demonstrated an amazing national vitality. Her financial condition remained sound from beginning to end. She built up a foreign trade that was gaining in strength until checked by the restrictions of war operations in the Baltic and North Seas. She made notable gains in such fields as education, scientific research, and agronomy. Her levels of living advanced far beyond those prevailing in Russia and Poland. She was definitely facing westward and sought the privileges of western civilization.

Lithuania is definitely a Christian country. She held tenaciously to her pagan beliefs and, once having made the surrender to the Catholic Church, she holds just as tenaciously to the Christian precepts. It has been said that the early Christian Church lost its virility when it became opulent and powerful. There is little doubt that the early Church, whose followers would cheerfully become martyrs rather than desert their position of faith, was strong. It is not far fetched to assume that the Church of Lithuania is stronger today because of Bolshevik persecution and Nazi occupation. This Church has a mission to perform and that mission is the restoration of Lithuanian independence.

By the very nature of things, the Christian Church will ever be at war with Communism, Nazism, Fascism and all other isms that prefer to regularize and regiment the Church to serve the ends of the State. It is an acknowledged fact that the Christian Church must ever serve independently of State direction and it is to the welfare of the Church when a land enjoys a complete religious freedom as well as economic and political liberty.

Lithuania looks abroad to transplanted strength. She looks with some satisfaction to the days of the American Revolutionary War when certain people left the land of Lithuania for adventure abroad. Such an adventurer was General Kosciuszko who served under General George Washington. Following the Russian seizure of the year 1795, many more sought to escape the fury of the Russian and went by diverse routes to North and South America. Great numbers arrived during the year 1867, continuing on to the 1900s.

Some have estimated the number of Lithuanian emigres at 1,000,000 located in many parts of various continents. It is not

strictly proper to classify groups of Lithuanians in America as being colonies although their tendency is to group themselves together for protection, comfort and companionship. The cities where most Lithuanians find themselves rapidly becoming Americans in every sense, are: Chicago, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Boston and Worcester.

Many Jewish people have also emigrated to the United States. Most of them are found in New York and other populous centers. In New York we find an organization called "The Federation of American Jews of Lithuanian descent."

The present Immigration Act seems quite adequate in most respects although its main purpose is nullified since it has no quota for the Jew who is therefore forced to seek entry from all points. Immigration of the preferred stocks of northern Europeans has so fallen off that some people favor a new Act to care for new conditions.

The year 1941 saw the re-establishment of Haile-Selasie to his rightful place on the throne of Ethiopia. Practically the entire world decried the foolish Italian attempt to extend their obnoxious rule over these freedom loving people who most certainly can hope to achieve a great deal more in an independent state than subservient to a people who lack in governing skill. Lithuanian diplomats had criticized the policy of the League in pursuing a vacillating policy with regard to this international move so generally condemned.

The rapid military moves of the German war machine has again brought a conquering tread over Lithuanian soil. At the moment of writing these pages, it is difficult to foresee the exact status of Lithuania although one can assume that the people of the land will rejoice in the deliverance from the Communistic threat. The fact remains that it is always difficult to get rid of the conquering heroes once they are firmly established in vantage positions. In any event, Lithuania must await the time of Peace Conferences which will surely follow the termination of all hostilities and there is again quiet on the various fronts.

The distress signal most frequently heard by ships at sea is: three short, three long, and three short. The call letters are S. O. S. and it would seem fitting to regard this as meaning "Sudiev O Sudiev" Lietuva. Sudiev means "God be with you," and we close

this study with that word addressed to Lithuania. This country has placed her trust in God and God will never forsake her.

CHRONOLOGY. 1917 TO 1938.

Spring, 1917. The Lithuanian delegates to the Russian Duma met to discuss the ways and means of setting up the machinery for Lithuanian Independence. Mr. Ycas, one of their members, told me that a serious attempt was made to strike for total independence but that the majority felt it was the wise course to ask for autonomy within the Russian Reich. A Lithuanian National Council was formed. In the turbulent times following the collapse of Russia, the stand of the Provisional government and the turn of the Reds, these Lithuanian patriots were forced to flee to Lithuania. Their early insistence on recognition aided in the general success of Lithuanian independence.

Lithuanian National Council met at Voronezh. It set forth certain ethnographic claims and laid the foundations for future claims. Withdrawal of the Germans was asked and free access to the Baltic suggested as the best solution to needs.

September 18-23, 1917. The Lithuanian conference at Vilnius authorized the Council (the Lithuanian term for Council is Taryba) to act provisionally. From the Vilnius source came the most effective nationalistic movement.

December 1917. The Taryba made a formal declaration of Lithuanian Independence but it had little effect since there were no effective methods yet devised, and the members felt that a Constituent Congress was necessary to give legality to democratic claims.

December 11, 1917. The Taryba, in response to insistent German pressure, declared in resolution that German aid was desirable.

February 16, 1918. The Lithuanians proclaimed their independence by announcement of the duly recognized Taryba. Amongst these early members of the Taryba we find Smetona.

March 3, 1918. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was a very interesting and enlightening document. It revealed to the Lithuanians, that despite their protestations of no ulterior motives, they might have cause to fear German aggrandizement. The terms of this

Treaty giving to German jurisdiction all territories then held and lying west of the Riga-Dvinsk-Lyda-Pruzhany line, included Lithuanian territory. That it nevertheless would have been better to have been within German orbits rather than Russian didn't make it any more attractive to the liberty bound people of Lietuva.

March 23, 1918. The Germans announced the recognition de jure of Lithuania as granted by the Kaiser. It was a bit premature since the German occupational troops were in no mood to depart and since the machinations of the German politicians were, as yet, not completed.

June 14, 1918. German wishes were being complied with by the request of the Lithuanian Taryba given to Duke William of Urach to ascend a Lithuanian throne as King Mindaugas II. Whether or not this worthy had any filtered blood of the original Mindaugas remains a moot point. The movement failed in the general working out of the whole problem for the good of Lithuania. This invitation was, moreover, accepted by Duke William, and necessitated some procrastination.

October 20, 1918. Full administrative powers were granted to the Lithuanian government and arrangements suggested for legislative powers being taken over also. It was a judicious move on the part of Germany since they could plainly see the military handwriting upon the wall and sought now to take out a bit of insurance for the morrow.

November 2, 1918. The Taryba met on this day to withdraw the invitation that had been given to the Duke and accepted by that worthy. The intent and purpose of the Lithuanian National movement now was clearly a free and independent Democracy. Voldemaras was chosen to form a Cabinet which would represent all parties.

November 11, 1918. Armistice day was celebrated within Lithuania also. The new Taryba immediately set about more earnestly than ever to prepare for the measures that would come when the Germans evacuated.

The evacuation of Lithuania and the rest of the Baltics did not take place as suddenly as some might have thought possible. Certain forces straggled. There was an organized attempt under Von der Goltz to strengthen the groups of Baltic Germans and test

out the possibility of organizing and holding a German State. It was to last until the fall of 1919 and it would be well for us to realize this as we look into the events of the next few months. The first and foremost threat is, of course, from Russia. Here the revolution had unloosed strange forces and hordes of would be conquerors who would follow the evacuating German troops.

April 4, 1919. Mr. Smetona was elected President of the Republic of Lithuania.

April 16, 1919. Moment of the Coup d'Etat that placed Dr. Niedra, the Latvian Lutheran pastor, at the head of the new Latvian government. Von der Goltz was at the head of the armed forces that left Libau for Riga and Pskov.

April 20, 1919. The Poles were successful against the Russian hordes and drove them back along the Vilnius salient. When one thinks of the Poles marching against the Russians, it is well to bear in mind the Pripet marshes which border the Polish lands on the east and around which it is necessary for large forces to march.

April 19, 1919. Voldemaras pleads before League of Nations.

June 18, 1919. Colonel Reboul, Chief of French Military Mission, fixes demarcation line.

July 7, 1919. The Latvians aided by Estonians turned on Von der Goltz and retook Riga. Herr Von der Goltz decided to return to Germany.

July 11, 1919. Marshal Foch ordered the Poles to withdraw from Lithuania.

October 1919. Colonel Bermondit fought with General Von der Goltz but apparently had a wee bit thicker skull. He just wouldn't give up what he thought was a good thing. He kept his German Balts and Latvian irregulars together and continued to fight in the vicinity of Riga, especially in that part lying between Riga, Mitau and Libau. At one juncture of his irregular career, he led his forces toward Lithuania and penetrated as far as Siauliai. The Lithuanian forces turned him back and shortly thereafter he gave up. This was in November 1919.

December 8, 1919. The border between Lithuania and Poland had not as yet been satisfactorily drawn since Polish forces occupied Vilnius and refused to withdraw on the pretext that the

Lithuanians were too weak to hold it against the Russians. Thus the Curzon Line came into existence.

January, 1920. The Latvians expelled the Bolsheviks from their borders.

January, 1920. The First Baltic Conference was held at Helsinki. Five new powers are represented, namely, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland.

February 2, 1920. The Estonians were successful in negotiating an agreement with the Russians. The Treaty of Tartu grants full recognition to Estonia. The Russians glare from the other side of Narva.

June, 1920. Acting President Smetona resigns to turn over full powers to the Constituent Congress. This Congress was composed of some 112 members. A new Seimas headed by Stulginskis who also acted as President of the Republic. Dr. Kazys Grinius was chosen to serve as Prime Minister.

May 15, 1920. The Lithuanian Constituent Congress announced the results of its work.

July 12, 1920, the plenipotentiaries of Lithuania and Russia signed the treaty wherein we read these binding words:

"relying on the strength of a declaration made by the Federal Soviet Socialist Republic of Russia to the effect that all peoples of every nationality have the right of self determination and complete separation from the State to which they belonged previously, Russia, without any reservation whatsoever, recognizes Lithuania as a self-governing and independent State with all juridical consequences that follow from such a recognition and, in a spirit of free and good will, renounces all sovereignty rights of Russia concerning the Lithuanian nation and Lithuanian territory which previously belonged to her. The fact that Lithuania for some time was under Russian sovereignty does not impose on the Lithuanian people and their territory any obligations towards Russia."

July 12, 1920. The Lithuanians signed a Peace Treaty with the Russians at Moscow. By its terms they receive the administrative districts of Kaunas, Vilnius, Gardinas and Suvalkai. It is generally

assumed accurate that these territories, while not commensurate with the larger claims that might possibly derive from the greater Lithuania (which claims incidentally were taken care of by the simple expedient of a Lithuanian renouncement), were drawn from ethnographical data of the most reliable sources. The Treaty guaranteed the complete and whole independence of Lithuania. Note that Lithuania's claims overlapped that territory upon which Poland might be assumed to have an interest.

July 14, 1920. Russian Reds and Lithuanians entered Vilnius.

July 15, 1920. The Lithuanians received Vilnius.

1921. The Baltic States joined the League of Nations.

March 3, 1921. The League gave up the idea of conducting a plebiscite in the Vilnius territory.

March, 1921. The Latvian-Lithuanian boundary was defined by the Joint Commission. It could have been improved by the granting of Libau to Lithuania; obviously the Latvians had little need of this port since Riga remained an excellent outlet.

July 21, 1921. The Baltic Conference was now a four power proposition without the presence of Lithuania. At its next meeting in Helsinki (the third in consecutive order), no results worth announcing were achieved. Finland was seeking to mold the powers together in a working and fighting arrangement that was calculated to insure their freedom.

May-September, 1921. Mr. Hymans headed the special commission to whom was delegated the task of solving the Lithuanian-Polish boundary dispute. They offered a solution but it did not meet with any success.

Feb. 20, 1922. The Poles conducted an election in the Vilnius Territory. It was supposed to be in the nature of a plebiscite but the Jews and Lithuanians obviously abstained from voting thus nullifying the election.

March 13-17, 1922. The four Baltic powers met in conference at Warsaw. A tightly bound pact was out of the question but they sought to reach accord on the modus vivendi that would be mutually beneficial and allow for closer coordination of effort.

March 24, 1922. Polish Sejm annexed Vilnius territory.

March 30, 1922. Russia rejects sporadic attempts to bring about disarmament of frontiers.

July 28, 1922. Lithuania recognized "de jure" by the United States of America.

August 1, 1922. The Lithuanian Constitution was formally adopted. Largely patterned after the constitutions of the United States, Switzerland and France, it gave the Lithuanian people democratic guarantees that were drawn for their good. The Congress was called the Seimas and was elected to serve for a term of three years. The President was elected for a term of three years by the Seimas. In the Constitution of 1928 the length of the term was made 7 years.

October 1, 1922. The Second Seimas undertook to solve the Currency question.

THE THIRD SEIMAS IN SESSION.

January 10, 1923. The Lithuanian force cautiously advanced under the leadership of Col. Budrys and, meeting little resistance from either the astonished Germans indigenous to the territory or the French garrison performing the highly distasteful task of policing the Mandate, took over the strip of territory extending from a point near Palanga to the Nemunas river. A hastily gathered provisional group of some 120 delegates were gathered at Heydekrug and promptly voted for union with Lithuania.

Feb. 3, 1923. League Council announces new line for Lithuania.

Feb. 16, 1923. This date was chosen for the announcement that the transfer of the territory by the Council of Ambassadors had been accomplished. The name Memel was changed to Klaipeda by the Lithuanians who pointed out that this was the ancient name of the city.

March 15, 1923. The Council of Ambassadors recognized the Lithuanian-Polish border as that defined on Feb. 3, 1923. Lithuania categorically refused to accept this decision.

On Sept. 28, 1926, the Lithuanian-Soviet Non-Aggression Treaty was signed. It was extended by mutual consent until December 31, 1945. It read, in part:

"Article 2. The Republic of Lithuania and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics mutually undertake to respect in all circumstances the sovereignty and territorial integrity and inviolability of each other.

"Article 3. Each of the two contracting parties undertake to refrain from any aggressive action whatsoever against the other party.

"Article 5. Should a conflict arise and, if impossible to liquidate in a diplomatic way, both contracting parties agree, in such case, to nominate conciliatory commissions."

1923-1926. Period of intense economic activity.

1926. Non-aggression pact with Russia.

December 17, 1926. The Coup d'état took place. The swing was described as one from the left to one of conservatism. Reason for the coup was given as a purported communist putsch. Smetona became President in place of Grinius. Voldemaras assumed the chair of Prime Minister in place of Slezevicius.

1929-1930. The University of Kaunas had 3960 students.

Summer, 1929. An abortive attempt on the life of Dictator Voldemaras. By fall, Voldemaras had quarreled with Smetona, grown moody about failures and resigned.

1932. Japan moved into Manchukuo and set up a dummy State.

1933. Japan occupies Jehol.

January 1, 1933. Herr Hitler became the Chancellor of the Reich.

In London, on July 5, 1933, a Definition of Aggression was proposed by the Soviets and accepted by most of the League Covenanters. It read:

"Accordingly, the aggressor in an international conflict shall, without prejudice to the agreements in force between the parties to the dispute, be considered to be that State which is the first to commit any of the following actions:

a) Declaration of war upon another State,

- b) Invasion by its armed forces, with or without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State,
- c) Attack by its land, naval or air forces with or without a declaration of war on the territory, vessels or aircraft of another State. (Art. II).

"No political, military, economic, or other considerations may serve as an excuse or justification for the aggression defined in Article II."

October 3, 1933. A gangster tried to assassinate the Austrian Chancellor, Mr. Dollfuss.

December 24, 1933. The Roumanian Prime Minister, Dr. Duca, was assassinated.

February, 1934. More difficulties for Austria as the German plan becomes more apparent.

June, 1934. The Nazi party enjoyed a blood bath purge.

July 25, 1934. Von Papen finally "got" the Austrian Chancellor.

January, 1935. Voting in the Saar District showed a decided German majority and sentiment.

March, 1935. Chancellor Hitler announced the resumption in Germany of compulsory military training in open defiance to the Treaty arrangements.

April 14, 1935. Diplomats frittered away time at Stresa.

October, 1935. Italy committed an open act of brigandage to start off the "steals."

Later, the son of Mussolini declared that his bombing was beautiful and reminded him of a rose unfolding when the Ethiopian bodies hurtled through the air. The whole world condemned the brutal Italian conquest and considered sanctions.

November 15, 1935. Italians referred to as wops and dagos by practically all Americans. Sanctions are applied by some nations. Vatican was strangely silent.

March 7, 1936. The German troops marched into the Rhineland. All Allied Europe was aroused but not sufficiently so that war was

threatened. France proved the saying that "she will hide behind the wall and protect France, beloved France, and only France."

July, 1936. The League of Nations dropped the sanction idea as impractical.

July 18, 1936. War breaks out in Spain and rapidly shows itself as internecine.

November, 1936. Herr Hitler denounced the "river clauses" of Versailles Treaty. Four days before, Edward had abdicated in favor of Wally.

1936. Russia negotiated a Pact with Outer Mongolia.

1937. Fierce fighting developed in Spain. The Spaniards are good fighters once they have been thoroughly aroused. German and Italian ships are hovering about, ready for an excuse to take a more active part in the conflict. Eventually they will find a place for their technicians, air forces, etc., in trial fighting.

1937. Fighting breaks out in China as Japan picked a first class war with the Chinese. They are unable to finish it in the time they originally set.

THE GERMAN CAISSONS ROLL 1938—

March 11, 1938. German troops march, ride, fly, and steer their way into the little state known as Austria. Jews flee in every direction to escape the Jew baiting Nazi.

March 15, 1938. The Polish ultimatum is accepted by Lithuania. The Vilnius question is settled only partially for Lithuania refuses to consider the matter of her claims.

May 21, 1938. The Czechs see the handwriting on the wall and begin mobilization. They soon discover that their high sounding allies have hollow voices.

June 1938. Discussion relative to the settlement of the Sudeten Problem is held.

August, 1938. Negotiations are held. Czecho is soon to understand that her future will be a secondary matter, if appeasement can only be effected.

Sept. 5, 1938. The raucous voice of Herr Hitler addresses the Nuremberg Conference.

Oct. 1, 1938. Sudeten invaded.

March 15, 1939. The German army marches quietly and unopposed into Bohemia and Moravia. Anyone who resists will be guaranteed "permanent peace."

March 16, 1939. Slovakia is guaranteed protection for their aid in the maneuver. Hungary and Poland take a bit of Czecho.

March 17. While Chamberlain is appeasing in London, the Lithuanian government has decided that the Memel question had better be solved and instructs Foreign Minister Urbys to call upon Von Ribbentrop at Berlin.

March 19. The Bolsheviki propose a conference which is turned down. The pathetic apathy of England and France has affected Russian Foreign Policy.

March 21. Lithuania cedes Memel Territory back to Germany.

March 26. Il Duce speaks up as follows: "A long period of peace is necessary for the development of European civilization." If he thought in German terms, the "long period of peace" might well have meant permanent peace of death.

March 28. Germany warns Poland about being stiff necked and Hitler's generous terms are announced: The return of Danzig and the granting of a corridor in exchange for a guarantee of boundaries. Coming as these words did after the demonstration of Germany's solemn word to Czecho, they failed to impress. It sounded much like the words of some Sing Sing killer who promises to be good if people will leave the front door open.

March 31. Chamberlain announces Great Britain's pledge to Poland. Immediate German reaction is one of "encirclement" and serves to stir up the war tempo within Germany. Most youthful Germans are spoiling for a fight.

April 2. Herr Hitler speaks at Wilhelmshaven.

April 3. Mr. Beck of Poland visits in London. It is reported in Lithuania that he has received the irrevocable promise of Britain to aid in resisting Germany.

April 7. The Romans march into Albania utilizing Good Friday for this purpose.

April 9. The Italian Pope finds it difficult to address the nations on Easter in view of the serious defection of his nation in invading a harmless nation in the best German fashion.

April 13. Britain is busy assuring the various other component parts of her Cordon Sanitaire.

April 16, 1939. President Roosevelt makes a heroic attempt to stem the flow of ruthless vandalism. He asks for a 10 year guarantee period of Herr Hitler. No response.

April 24, 1939. The British Ambassador returns to London to write "Failure of a Mission."

April 24, 1939. Britain begins conscription, rather a belated gesture but necessary, as Hitler fumes against the force of foolish pacts.

May 3, 1939. Stalin purges the Jewish influence in his "Cabinet" by removing Litvinov.

May 5, 1939. Poland offers a stiffer resistance to the Axis Permanent Appeasement.

May 7, 1939. Italy is sold by Mussolini into Germany's care. They call it the Axis.

May 18, 1939. Denmark signs (very solemnly) the non-aggression pact with Hitler.

May 26, 1939. The British are fumbling and fiddling in Russia while Germany plans.

May 31, 1939. Molotov, now Commissar for Foreign Affairs, gives a tip as to Russia's course.

June 13, 1939. British send Strang to find out what's what in Russia.

July 10, 1939. Chamberlain pumps up Polish courage. They believe him.

July 21, 1939. Germany warns that the Danzig Problem must be solved. They admit that they prefer a peaceful solution.

August 3, 1939. German practice with large guns on the Polish border. Poles show a readiness to fight. They are sadly lacking in equipment. One half of their forces are cavalry.

August 10, 1939. Observers learn that the British are skeptical about the whole Russian deal. Members of the German Embassy in Moscow enjoy a rather buoyant elation.

August 13. The League Commissioner of the Danzig Freistadt visits Hitler. He comes on to Lithuania.

August 16, 1939. The Germans put on the pressure in the Danzig matter. It is quite apparent that they mean business, even war, if their ends are to be served.

August 21, 1939. The Germans dramatically announce the Russian-German Pact. It was calculated to influence Poland. It didn't.

August 22, 1939. Italy dawdles in the wake of their German masters.

August 24, 1939. President Roosevelt makes an effort to bring about a conference.

The British Fleet is mobilized. Poland is prepared. The stage is set. German planes are ready to be wheeled out into the open runways to set their course for Polish airfields, ammunition dumps, and concentration points.

September 1, 1939. World War II breaks out. German forces overrun Poland and Russia enters Poland's back door.

October 10, 1939. Russia returns the Vilnius Territory to Lithuania. Russia demands the right to station 25,000 troops within Lithuania as a safeguard against aggression.

On October 10, 1939, Lithuania signed a Pact of Mutual Assistance with Russia, largely through restraint and on the threat of dire circumstances if resistance was offered. It read:

Article 7. "The realization of this Treaty must not infringe the sovereign rights of the contracting parties especially the structure of their state, their economic and social systems, military instruments and altogether the principle of non-intervention of one State in the internal affairs of another State."

April 22, 1940. The strain in Vilnius over the Church problem has reached a serious point. The Archbishop Jalbzykowski is a Pole since the Vatican has recognized the Vilnius Territory as Polish Territory and now refuses to make any radical change

in the Church lists. He is opposed to Lithuanian clergy serving in new assignments in Vilnius. Many Lithuanians have attended the various Catholic Churches in Vilnius and have demonstrated against the Polish sermons. They persist in singing the Lithuanian anthems in Church to show their displeasure. On April 21, Sunday, the Polish clergy left the Church when the demonstrators got beyond control. The church war extends on down through May.

May 16, 1940. The American Minister plants ivy by the tomb of the Lithuanian unknown soldier. The ivy was supplied from Mount Vernon by the American Red Cross as a token of the close friendship enjoyed by the two Republics.

May 30, 1940. The Soviet Union seems to prefer making certain charges against the Lithuanian government regarding the treatment of Soviet garrison troops. It is all very vague and quite apparently only a pretext. The Lithuanian Minister to Russia is at Kaunas.

May 30, 1940. The editor of XX Amzius is fined 1000 lits for publishing a cartoon ridiculing the Soviet. Freedom flies fast.

June 4, 1940. Lithuania has strengthened the police guard about the regions now occupied by the garrison troops. The story that seems to worry the Soviets sounds silly but will warrant a retelling. The Soviet authorities claim that in four incidents, Soviet soldiers have disappeared only to return later with tales of having been beaten, burned and otherwise maltreated for information concerning the camps. It appears more logical that the soldiers deserted because obviously the life in Lithuania was so much better than that of Russia or even the garrison camps within Lithuania. One wouldn't criticize the soldiers a great deal. However, the Lithuanian police are quite anxious to preserve what good order the Bolshevik is capable of allowing. There is a feeling at the Foreign Office that the Russian is ready to utilize this incident as a pretext for larger moves.

June 5, 1940. Molotov receives the Lithuanian Minister to Russia at Moscow. The discussion of the incident is prolonged.

June 6, 1940. The Soviet Minister to Lithuania, Mr. Pozdniakov, is also in Moscow. Mr. Merkys, Lithuanian Prime Minister, finds it necessary to leave for Moscow. Accompanying him are General Rastikis and Dr. Maciulis.

The Baltic Economic Conference is being held at Tallinn. Norikaitis heads the Lithuanian delegation.

June 10, 1940. The official estimate of refugees within Lithuania on this date is given as 12,000 Poles and 11,000 Jews.

More ominous notes on the foreign front: Lithuanian Foreign Minister, Mr. Urbysys leaves for Moscow since obviously the Russians are merely marking time for their big move.

June 13, 1940. General Skucas, Minister of the Interior, today handed his resignation to President Smetona. It was immediately accepted and Prime Minister Merkys stated that he would temporarily remain in charge. At least the true Russian intent begins to show.

June 14, 1940. Favorite stunt of the Polish terrorists in Vilnius is to dry-gulch Lithuanian policemen.

June 14, 11 P. M. Molotov hands the Lithuanian Foreign Minister the Russian ultimatum. The Russian Tass issues statements over the radio and to the press. Reaction in Lithuania when the terms are finally announced. Various individuals prepare to flee, if their worst fears are true.

June 15, 1940. President Antanas Smetona flees to Germany after having pleaded with his Cabinet for token resistance against the voracious Russian bear. He entered Germany where the Gestapo "protected" him during his stay. At first the observers thought that the Lithuanian Constitution provided for just such emergencies but the powers passed to Prime Minister and Acting President Merkys were solely of the administrative or secondary variety. Merkys did not have the power to change governments, make treaties, or sell his country under threat of force to the U. S. S. R. The Russian reorganizers with eyes intent on Germany were interested only in making everything point towards the defense of that country against the inevitable advance of the Germans. Lithuania had been forced into the war much against her will.

June 15, 1940. Dekanozov (meaning the son of a deacon), Assistant Commissar for Foreign Affairs, arrived with Minister Pozdniakov by plane from Moscow at 3 P. M.

June 17, 1940. General Vitkauskas ordered the army to remain extremely decorous and treat the Russians as some sort of brother, if that is possible.

June 17, 1940, Justin Paleckis, who has lately languished in jail because of his outspoken criticism of the Lithuanian government and activities as a Communistic spy, becomes the Prime Minister of Lithuania (under a Russian Commissar, of course). He said: "I expect from the whole Lithuanian press a full understanding of the situation and a complete loyalty to my government." One of his first acts was to visit the political prisoners and order a change of treatment. He gave them the assurance they would soon be freed.

June 18, 1940. One hundred and four prisoners are released and they seize the occasion to parade up and down the avenues. God help their personal enemies.

General Skucas and Police Director Povilaitis are in jail awaiting execution.

The new Foreign Minister who replaces Mr. Urbys is called Kreve-Mickevicius.

June 20, 1940. Officials are falling so fast and furious that it is impossible to keep up with the lists. It is quite obvious that the whole setup is changed from a hard Nationalistic right to a soft Soviet left from whom nothing good can be expected.

June 21, 1940. The Son of a Deacon, Dekamozov, is quite a busy man looking over everything of importance and worrying perhaps about his share of the loot. He is being feted by the new government. The President of the Republic, Mr. Paleckis, is busy signing pardons for prisoners. Some of the boys now running loose are well known murderers and arsonists.

June 22, 1940. Various outbreaks between factory workers and those either in charge or merely the owners are being reported. The Labor Protection Law is being enforced and apparently its prime motive is to keep the wheels turning until the new order sets in. The work of organizing every worker goes on and soon all shall be completely Sovietized.

June 23, 1940. The workers were very careful to remove pictures of former President Smetona from public buildings. They have also changed the name of Lithuania's one gunboat from President Smetona to Pirmunas.

June 24, 1940. There are frequent large demonstrations and the loud speakers go on and on with the Soviet drool. No one

seems to be impressed but the air is charged and officials are seeking to flee the land. It is apparent that only harm will come to those who formerly sought to serve their country either in the government or in the industrial development.

June 25, 1940. The Lithuanian Communist Party is legalized by the Minister of the Interior. He also ordered that only Soviet publications might circulate throughout the country. It is a peculiar happening also that the new Labor building just completed and one of the finest in Lithuania is being utilized as a Communistic headquarters.

June 28, 1940. It is announced that the Seimas will be dissolved on July 1, 1940. The uniform of the Lithuanian police is changing from a snappy and colorful hue to a dull drab to resemble the Soviet sackcloth.

June 29, 1940. Many papers have been closed. One new paper has made its appearance and significantly enough utilizes the Russian language.

July 1, 1940. The Lithuanian army is urged to maintain good relations with the Reds.

July 3, 1940. The Lithuanian army will henceforth be known as the Lithuanian People's Army. It will be supplied with a complement of political leaders to introduce the Communistic ideals necessary. It will have its own propaganda office.

July 5, 1940. Ernest Galvanauskas finds it impossible to continue working in the present setup and resigns as Minister of Finance since obviously there is no finance left.

July 6, 1940. A. Petrauskas has been appointed the Political leader of the army.

July 7, 1940. A strange assortment of Seimas candidates are put forward. Opera singers, musicians, writers, soldiers, and faithful sons of the people dominate the list.

July 7, 1940. The army units near Kaunas hold a rousing demonstration.

July 10, 1940. A new Estonian Minister to Lithuania has been named. His name is R. Kasperis. It appears that the Lutheran Bishop who is being recalled faces almost certain death since

he dared to express himself against the aims of Communistic Russia.

July 12, 1940. The business of cancelling visas is under full swing. No one will know whether or not a visa will be honored from now on. They are granted and then immediately cancelled. The reign of terror grows more intense. People are disappearing nightly. A. Petrauskas who recently was appointed political leader (Commissar) to the army has been replaced by Jonas Macijauskas.

July 13, 1940. There is established a Confiscation Commission to handle matters of the property of those who fled Lithuania. On this Commission are A. Dickus, L. Adomauskas, and Danta. General Feliksas Baltusis-Zemaitis replaces General Vitkauskas as C. of C. of Lithuanian army. He issues an order releasing all military men from jails and ordering the army to participate in the general elections.

July 15, 1940. The Minister of Education, A. Venclova announces the rearrangement of the educational system of Lithuania.

The Minister of the Interior orders all arms and ammunition to be delivered to the police within 48 hours from July 15th.

July 15th. The great elections of Lithuania were held. In one precinct the result was 122% according to a report coming from one on the inside. 319,000 voted in the Vilnius Territory. The total vote for the country was announced as 1,375,349 people voting for the People's Seimas out of the 1,386,569 people voting. It was a vote of 99.19%. Just who the others voted for is beyond the guess of even a maniac for there was one list.

July 19, 1940. Meetings throughout the country are being organized to urge immediate annexation of Lithuania to the USSR.

July 21, 1940. The Seimas formally runs through the prepared motions among which is one asking that immediate incorporation into the Soviet Union be arranged. Legations prepare to close up their business. Lithuania is slowly dying and the pangs are not pleasant to observe. Paleckis, who ran out of his home clad only in his nightshirt and shouted madly that he would refuse to sell his country, apparently has resigned himself to the inevitable and hopes for some sort of reward. Those who know the Rus-

slams predict that eventually he will be seen in Siberia since his work is almost complete.

July 30, 1940. The American Minister is one of the first to leave since the United States government prefers to regard the whole turnover illegal.

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